



NAVY NEWS

MAY 2012

LAST BLAST

FINAL SEA DART LAUNCH

LOCHS & LOCKS

DOWN THE GREAT GLEN WITH ARCHER

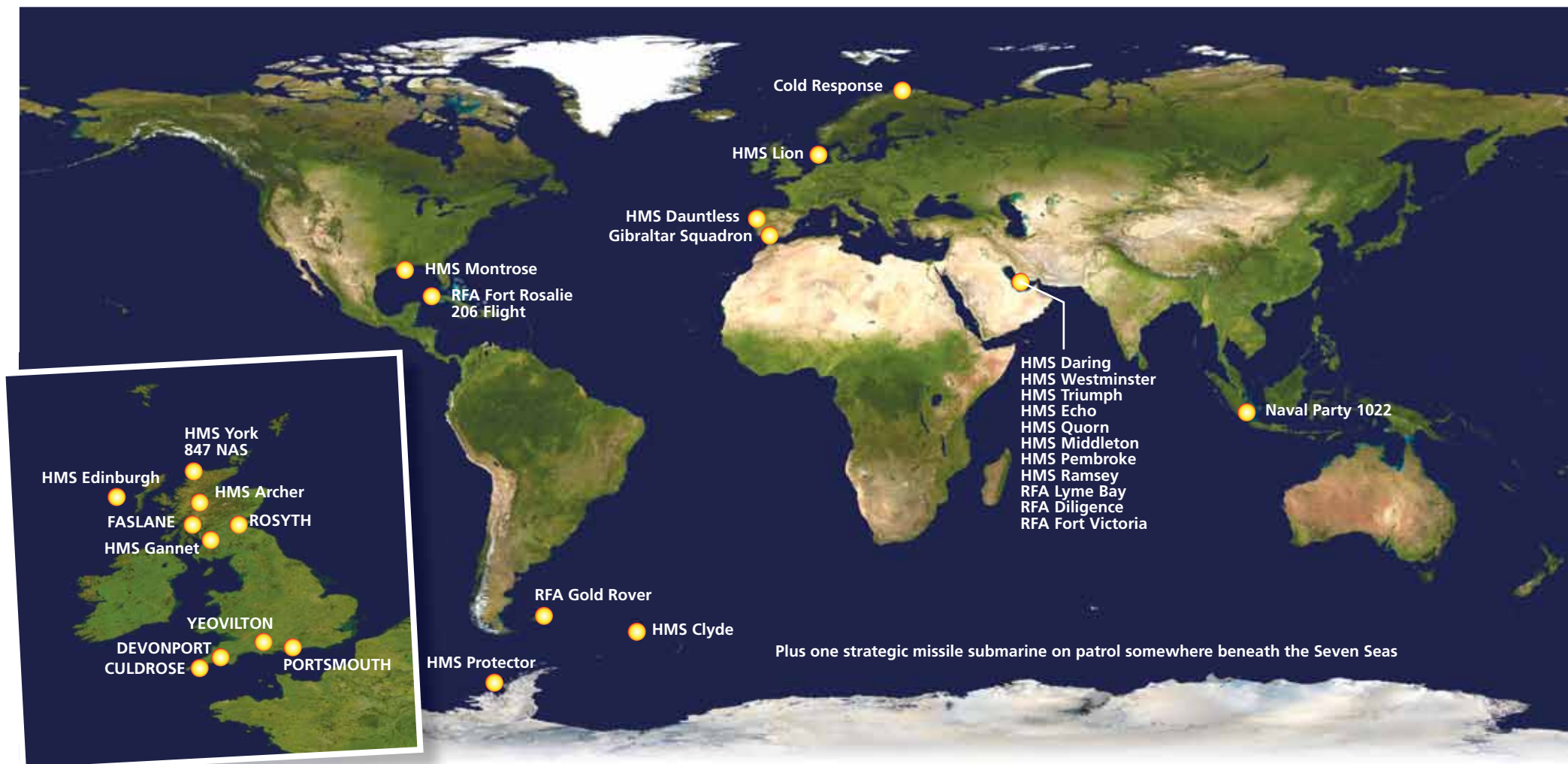


HMS Daring turns away from the USS Carl Vinson – one of two American super-carriers Britain's most advanced warship has worked with as she makes her mark in the Gulf. See pages 24-25 for details.

Picture: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan, HMS Daring

DARING DO





FIRST to the best among us, the men and women awarded gongs in the Operational Honours list – the bulk to Royal Marines for their bravery in Afghanistan, but also to the medics and support team who have put in their time amid the dry heights of this landlocked country.

The actions of the ships and personnel during the NATO campaign to safeguard the people of Libya against Colonel Gaddafi's attacks were also recognised with honours and decorations – *their detailed stories can be found on pages 4-5.*

Despite the May sunshine, you may detect a certain chill in these pages.

One item guaranteed to deliver a shiver is **HMS Protector's** exploration of ice caverns in Antarctica (*see page 10*).

Snow and ice abounded at the opposite end of the earth too as Exercise Cold Response reached its climax in the fjords of Norway for the Royal Marines of **42 Commando** with assault ship **HMS Bulwark**, helicopter carrier **HMS Illustrious** (albeit briefly) and **HMS Liverpool** (*see pages 28-29*).

Falklands Patrol ship **HMS Clyde** also ventured into icier waters with a visit to South Georgia to clear the debris of a wrecked fishing vessel from its pristine beaches (*see page 13*).

Staying (briefly) in the South Atlantic, **HMS Montrose** has completed her quest to visit all our nation's South Atlantic territories (last on the list was Tristan da Cunha – *see page 6*).

Montrose has now handed over responsibility for the Southern Hemisphere to **HMS Dauntless**, which has sailed on her first deployment (*see page 7*).

Also on the Type 45 front, ship No.5 in the six-vessel programme, **HMS Defender**, is on the cusp of sailing to Portsmouth having completed her second period of sea trials (*see page 7*).

Meanwhile, Type 45 No.1 – aka **HMS Daring** – is beginning to make her mark on the world stage; the UK's first Type 45 destroyer has been put through her paces, including testing her mettle alongside two American Carrier Strike Groups (*see pages 24-25*).

Remaining where it's warm and sunny, **HMS Westminster** delivered terrorists/drug traffickers a £14m blow by intercepting a dhow carrying pure heroin in the Indian Ocean (*see page 14*).

Sunshine too, although perhaps surprisingly, for the students of the University of Aberdeen on board P2000 **HMS Archer** in their Easter deployment among the lochs and hills of the Highlands. Our editor joined them – *see pages 26-27*.

Also in Scotland, destroyer **HMS York** enjoyed a spot of gunnery funnery where the warship worked her way through most of her arsenal, in company with the Lynx helicopters of **847 Naval Air Squadron**, on exercise Spring Wrath (*see page 8*).

Lynx aren't the only cats to be found in this month's edition; on page 12, we feature **HMS Lion** as our classic ship on the 96th anniversary of Jutland.

Students from all 14 University Royal Naval Units converged on **727 Naval Air Squadron** in Yeovilton for a unique chance to fly – instead of joining their patrol boats for the two-week spring deployment (*see page 21*).

And talking of unique chances to fly... The **F35 Joint Strike Fighter** dropped in on **HMS Excellent**; a cockpit demonstrator of the Fleet Air Arm's next-generation jet was shown off to pilots of the future and Navy HQ personnel (*see page 9*).

And finally, two eras end this month – no more Sea Dart firings (well, not scheduled ones...) and no more Crazy Red Chicken.

It fell to **HMS Edinburgh** to conduct the final Sea Dart launches off the Outer Hebrides (seven missiles loosed on the ranges – *see opposite*).

As for **HMS Liverpool**, well she has truly gone out with a bang from Libya heroics to exercises in the fjords to a visit from Prince of Wales and King Harald of Norway. On a beautiful spring morn in Portsmouth her White Ensign was lowered for the final time (*see page 18*), causing some trembling of the lower lip for even the staunchest of onlookers...



Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies, FRPU East

Argyll's hair's apparent

HOME after six months east of Suez are the men and women of Her Majesty's Ship Argyll.

In recognition of the ship's Scottish links a bagpiper from the Plymouth Pipe Band performed on the bridge roof, the Band of HM Royal Marines (plus a balloon sculptor, magician and facepainter) provided the entertainment on the jetty and a couple of Hercules transporters roared overhead.

A crowd of 650 cheering families and friends lined the waterfront for the occasion – but may not necessarily have recognised all of the ship's company after 186 days away from Devonport courtesy of a beard-growing contest which transformed not a few of the men aboard into rivals for the Hairy Bikers.

When not leaving facial hair untouched, the ship's company kept the sea lanes east of Suez free of ne'er-do-wells and the like (a duty she's now handed over to HMS Daring – *see pages 24-25*).

In doing so, their charge sailed more than 36,600 nautical miles – the equivalent of one and a half times around the globe – burning approximately 3,300 tonnes of fuel in the process.

Perhaps more surprising is that even with an email system that remains available both at sea and alongside, the ship still received over four tonnes of traditional post.

Impressive as such statistics are, they pale compared with the achievements of Argyll's Leading Logistician John Wicking – the most experienced sailor in the entire Royal Navy.

When he crossed the brow he completed 5,100 days of separated service – just short of 14 whole years at sea. No current sailor in the RN (we believe) has spent longer at sea – an achievement acknowledged by a personal letter from the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

The 49-year-old leading hand was greeted for the first time by his second grandchild, four-month-old Angelique, whom he's not yet seen – she was born during the deployment.

"I have been on many deployments during my time at sea and although this one has been hard work I've also enjoyed it, but I was really looking forward to meeting Angelique," said John, from Plymouth.

His ship spent the bulk of her deployment working as part of the 25-nation Combined Maritime Forces in the Gulf.

After a much-needed period of leave for her sailors and intensive maintenance package for the ship herself, Argyll will return to operational duties this summer.

"After a long deployment it is vitally important that everyone has the opportunity to take leave, spend time with their families and friends, and essentially re-charge their batteries," said CO Cdr Paul Stroude.

"My ship's company and I are glad to be home after an extremely-demanding yet professionally-fulfilling six-month operational deployment which would not have been possible without the support of our families."

Commandos resurrect wartime unit

WITH the wind and snow lashing them, 300 Royal Marines Commandos and sailors marked the official formation of their new unit – and the return of one of the Corps' most famous names.

Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines – who safeguard Britain's nuclear deterrent and are the Navy's experts in board and search/counter-piracy operations – are now 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines, resurrecting the title of a legendary wartime formation.

43 Commando served with distinction in the Mediterranean, Italy and the Adriatic and, after being disbanded shortly after the end of WW2, rematerialised for much of the 1960s before passing into history – until now.

Its modern-day successor – to be abbreviated as 43 Cdo FP Gp RM and now under the direct authority of 3 Commando Brigade – is the largest unit in the Corps at 790 men strong (including a substantial number of dark blue personnel).

The unit was officially re-formed on the 67th anniversary of 43 Commando's most famous actions, the battle for Lake Comacchio.

During the fighting around the lagoon, some 50 miles south of Venice in northeast Italy, Cpl Thomas Peck Hunter seized a Bren gun and stormed German machine-gun positions, shooting from the hip and single-handedly capturing or driving the enemy away until he was cut down – but not before his troop reached safety.

The action saw Hunter posthumously given the nation's highest military honour, the last (to date) of ten Victoria Crosses awarded to Royal Marines.

The battle is marked by today's Corps as Comacchio Day on April 3 which, as well as the standing up of the re-formed 43 Commando, this year saw the attendance of Cpl Hunter's 81-year-old sister Agnes Swinney.

She travelled from Edinburgh to watch proceedings, which also featured a short religious service followed by an address by the Royal Navy's Commander Operations, Rear Admiral Ian Corder.

One last blast

A FLASH of fire bright enough to bathe the Atlantic orange-yellow for an instant shows the Royal Navy's long-standing shield against air attack packs a punch right to the end.

HMS Edinburgh has carried out the last planned firing of the Sea Dart system in the build up to a major exercise off Scotland. The destroyer successfully fired seven missiles off the Outer Hebrides ahead of Exercise Joint Warrior, which tests Britain's military ability to respond to a crisis.

The firing was carried out to show the system could still be used, as Edinburgh will serve as the UK's final Type 42 destroyer while the new Type 45 destroyers and their Sea Viper missiles enter service.

A booster rocket helped the missiles roar away from the ship, accelerating Sea Dart to twice the speed of sound in a matter of seconds. It can take out a target over 40 miles away. In this instance, its target was a Mirach pilotless drone – a 13ft missile which flies at speeds of up to of 530 knots (more than 600mph) from altitudes as low as ten feet or as high as 40,000ft for up to 90 minutes.

The Portsmouth-based destroyer launched individual Sea Darts as well as firing a salvo – two missiles leaving the launcher on the foremast within seconds of each other.

Edinburgh's weapon engineering officer, Lt Cdr Stephen Carbery, in charge of Sea Dart, said: "This system has been at the heart of maritime operations for three decades, defending units and task groups from air attack since the Falklands conflict in 1982

through to off Libya last year.

"Edinburgh's deployment next year heralds the end of an era for Sea Dart and the Type 42 destroyer and we should be proud of both contributions over the past 30 years."

Some 3,750 square miles of ocean – that's an area bigger than the island of Cyprus – had to be cleared for a safe Sea Dart launch, known in official Royal Navy parlance as a High Seas Firing.

Sea Dart proved its worth in the Falklands conflict in 1982 – downing seven aircraft – and, a decade later, in the 1991 Gulf War when HMS Gloucester shot down an Iraqi Scud missile as it headed for the American battleship USS Missouri – the first time a missile has shot down another missile.

Although most associated with Type 42 destroyers, the Sea Dart missile was also fitted to destroyer HMS Bristol and, in the earlier years of their careers, the Invincible-class aircraft carriers.

Edinburgh's Commanding Officer Cdr Nick Borbone, said: "It is quite something for the team to have the opportunity to undertake what is likely to be the last peacetime firing of Sea Dart."

"The new destroyers with the Sea Viper system are well-placed to provide air defence this century but Sea Dart still packs a punch, and this firing is an important step forward for Edinburgh's preparations for operations later in the year."

Watch a video of the firings on our website at is.gd/yDmRX8



pictures: la(phot) dave jenkins, frpu east



Royal stormed gun site

A ROYAL Marine who stormed a machine-gun site has been awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross – the second-highest honour for gallantry.

Cpl Simon Wright-Hider saved several lives in Afghanistan with his brave attack on a guarded position.

The commando led a flanking move past improvised bombs to cut off insurgents who were firing machine guns and small arms at his colleagues.

He then dived through a water-filled ditch to get under a wall and confront the machine-gunner.

Cpl Wright-Hider said: "At the time there was a feeling of adrenaline but it was also quite calm because my team is so well-drilled."

The NCO was caught by enemy fire as 3 Cdo Bde's Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) moved through the Adanzai Bazaar on June 16 last year.

When the insurgents opened fire Cpl Wright-Hider's team volunteered to outflank the enemy and cut off their retreat.

As his team got out of their armoured vehicles they spotted an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) on a bridge, meaning others were probably nearby.

They moved past it and headed to the compound where insurgents were firing smaller weapons.

They were about to attack when they received information that there was a machine gunner ready to ambush them in the next compound.

Cpl Wright-Hider said: "We were glad we had the aerial support because we would have been caught in machine gun fire without it."

"My sergeant went through to check that there was a route into the compound and then I led us through."

The commando approached through an irrigation ditch, crawling through deep mud and water under the compound wall.

He said: "We didn't have a full picture of what to expect inside the compound but we knew we had to move quickly."

"We got in and managed to get in behind the position the machine gunner was ready in."

Cpl Wright-Hider fired at the insurgent, who ran off to a room – but he could not escape.

With the machine gunner killed, the other insurgents melted away and the BRF was able to move to a helicopter pick-up point.

Cpl Wright-Hider said: "It was a great result to have been able to get in and stop the fire coming at us."

The operation probably lasted more than an hour and we were able to collect our evidence and leave."

Sailors and Marines win bravery awards

The men and women of the Naval Service have won acclaim with operational honours.

Events off Libya brought recognition to some of the personnel involved in that long and demanding operation.

And further east the work in the Gulf and Iraq has won plaudits for other RN individuals.

Lt Cdr James Byron has been recognised with one of the top three military honours – the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) – for his courage and leadership as Commanding Officer of minehunter HMS Brocklesby in the military campaign off Libya (see right).

Destroyer HMS Liverpool also played a key role in the actions off Libya, and her CO Cdr Colin Williams has been made an OBE for his command of the veteran Type 42 destroyer as she enforced the embargo against the Gaddafi regime during the country's civil war and performed a vital task for NATO in her air defence mission.

Another minehunter was the source of recognition for WO Jeremy Bean, whose hard work and efforts won him a Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS) to keep HMS Chiddingfold's engines running in the demanding conditions of the Gulf.

The man who led the Royal Marines in Helmand in the past year – Maj Gen Ed Davis, who was head of 3 Commando Brigade, has been made a CBE (see opposite).

Reservist Michelle Ping received a Mention in Dispatches for her efforts in saving the life of a soldier during a firefight with Afghan insurgents.

The paramedic, who is an Aircraft Engineer Mechanic as a Reservist, climbed on to a roof to treat Highlander Craig Patterson (see opposite).

And interpreter AB Bruce Morley was awarded a QCVS for his recent tour of duty in Iraq (see opposite).

Two men who displayed nerves of steel feature in the list.

Jersey-born Maj Niki Cavill, officer commanding X-Ray Coy of 45 Cdo, was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) after sharing the risk of enemy attacks with his men during daily foot patrols in Nad-e-Ali South.

The officer, whose actor brother Henry will play Superman



● Maj Niki Cavill briefs the men of X Coy on patrol in Afghanistan

Picture: LA(Phot) Andy Laidlaw

in an upcoming Hollywood film, outfoxed Taliban attacks by placing his men in small groups to boost the Afghan local police.

Working between March and September last year, when temperatures soared above 40° Celsius, he would patrol three times a day risking contact with improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Cavill decided to try to prevent the traditional fighting season that occurs over the summer, to stop the enemy trying to discredit the Afghan government.

He sent Marines to very isolated locations where they lived in basic accommodation but could reposition quickly.

His method worked well, protecting the mission to improve security across Helmand Province.

His citation said: "Cavill knew the key to mobilising the Afghan people in the face of the insurgency was to discredit it, removing the fear that bitter experience caused it to hold over them."

One of his major successes came when he was able to oversee the capture of one of the main enemy ringleaders.

Meanwhile a stand-in checkpoint commander in the Royal Marines who led his men

in a 40-minute gun battle on open ground as the Taliban fired at him has been honoured with a Mention in Dispatches – the British forces' oldest gallantry in combat award.

Cpl Ross Adams braved fire aimed from just 100 metres away after an ambush.

The junior officer with Juliet Coy 42 Cdo ran Checkpoint Kamiabi in an isolated part of northern Nad-e-Ali district for three weeks in summer last year.

In that time it was hit by ferocious attacks from close range as insurgents attempted to overrun it.

In early August Adams was leading a patrol when it was caught in the ambush.

He and his team moved away and Cpl Adams decided to cross open ground to draw fire and show where the enemy was.

They were being fired at from less than 100 metres away but stayed calm, returning fire while Cpl Adams told his Company Commander of the deteriorating situation.

With their ammunition running low Cpl Adams took charge again.

He braved precise fire to identify where the insurgents were firing from and the follow-up air strike gave his men time to get away and

return to the checkpoint.

When they reached there they were shot at again with small arms fire and grenades.

Cpl Adams kept encouraging his men in the difficult few days that followed.

Despite the danger faced in the ambushes he organised his men to carry out a series of aggressive patrols every day for the following ten days.

With this work he set the conditions for a Company-level operation that would regain the ascendancy in the area.

His citation stated: "Despite the mounting psychological toll of being attacked every day, Adams remained stoic and tenacious, galvanising his men."

"His leadership, resolve and courage were way above and beyond that expected from a junior non commissioned officer."

The latest operational honours and awards list, announced on March 23, included 131 personnel from the three Services covering the period April 1 to September 31 2011, which includes military operations in Afghanistan (Herrick 14) and off Libya (Ellamy).

■ For full list of Royal Navy recipients of honours and awards see p42



Nurse eased pain for casualties

A NAVAL nurse who spent six months treating the most severely-wounded patients in Afghanistan has been honoured.

Lt Victoria Long (above) received the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS) for reducing casualties' pain levels at Camp Bastion's field hospital.

Lt Long, was the Ward Nurse at the desert location, working in the burns and plastic surgery field.

She oversaw the use of new dressings which meant troops' injuries healed more effectively, and worked tirelessly to reduce pain levels across the wards.

Lt Long worked exhausting days with the rest of the medical team to treat patients and either get them back into the field, prepare them for return to the UK or, in the case of Afghans, transfer them to regional facilities.

She said: "This is a fantastic honour and I am very grateful for having been nominated."

"I'm very humbled, and while it's a cliché it's a reflection of how hard everyone works there – we are all committed to helping our patients."

During her time away – April to September 2011 – Lt Long created strategies to manage wounds as effectively as possible and mentored staff in following them.

As the dedicated pain nurse, she also led the way in reducing pain for those being treated.

One new dressing contains a pump system which removes stale air and germs from sites and brings in clean air, speeding up the healing process.

Her citation stated: "It is clear that the care of the casualties was significantly enhanced by the measures she introduced, meeting the needs of those injured in battle and developing innovative techniques."

Lt Long is a member of Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service.

Ship sailed into danger zone

ROYAL Navy officer Lt Cdr James Byron has been recognised for his courage, leadership and determination in the line of fire.

Lt Cdr Byron was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) for his actions in support of Operation Ellamy, the military campaign conducted in Libya during 2011.

In command of Hunt-class minehunter HMS Brocklesby, the officer was tasked to examine the feasibility of undertaking hazardous operations in Libyan territorial waters.

Lt Cdr Byron was required to take his ship within range of pro-Gaddafi artillery and rocket batteries in order to locate and destroy buoyant mines.

Demonstrating courage, leadership and determination, Lt Cdr Byron led his team in the skilful destruction of a mine less than a mile from the entrance to Misratah harbour.

As further recognition of Lt Cdr Byron's leadership, he was given tactical control of other NATO minehunters.

Operating in broad daylight and without air support, he led his minehunter group into the mine danger area and with fortitude and gallantry, repeatedly took his ship within enemy missile and artillery range.

Officer wins trust of locals

AN OFFICER who won over suspicious tribal elders to deliver 150 trained police officers to a key district in Helmand Province has been made an MBE.

Capt Ross Drinkwater RM of 45 Cdo recruited, trained and organised the finances for every aspect of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) programme in Nad-e-Ali North.

The officer worked largely alone, balancing the pressures put on him by reluctant Afghan elders with the need to introduce greater security across the district.

He said: "It was a very difficult thing to achieve but I'm really proud of what we left there."

"I really enjoyed integrating with the Afghans and seeing them taking responsibility for their own communities."

The challenge Capt Drinkwater faced was great because the ALP was despised by the enemy and so faced constant danger.

He looked at this risk and managed it by constantly visiting ALP checkpoints and winning the argument for better equipment and protection.

"I had to be careful with



● Capt Ross Drinkwater training members of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) on the ranges at Patrol Base Silaab, Nad E Ali (South).

Picture: LA(Phot) Andy Laidlaw

pushing this programme because there was always the risk that the forces could be turned towards a tribal militia," he said.

"We stopped that happening by doing our research right, speaking to elders to make sure that the wish to take over a community policing programme was genuine and likely to succeed."

Senior Afghans still viewed

the programme with suspicion, and Capt Drinkwater, based at RM Condor in Arbroath, had to repeatedly explain what it was to people not connected with the ALP until its purpose was understood.

He said: "Now Nad-e-Ali has a professionally-trained force working across the district, spreading good practices among other agencies."



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More kudos for Mich

A RESERVIST medic who stepped into the line of fire to save a colleague has won another national honour.

Michelle Ping has received a Mention in Dispatches for saving the life of a soldier during a fierce encounter with Afghan insurgents.

With her platoon being targeted by rocket-propelled grenades and mortar fire, the Reservist, who was stationed with the Fourth Battalion Royal Regiment of Scotland, climbed onto a roof to treat 22-year-old Highlander Craig Patterson after he had been shot in the head.

On the exposed roof, under accurate fire, she shielded the casualty with her body and gave first aid.

She said: "Someone had taken Craig's helmet off and he was lying with his eyes open.

"I thought: 'I'm not going to let you die'."

She continued to give exceptional care as they moved more than a kilometre away to meet the evacuation helicopter – a series of actions which saved his life.

In December she won Best Reservist at *The Sun's* Millie military awards.



● Rev Dr Scott Shackleton at a shura in Afghanistan

Picture: LA(Phot) Andy Laidlaw

Plaudits for 'Roving Rev'

A NAVY padre who blessed water bottles to baptise men under fire is among the latest group of military honours winners.

The Rev Dr Scott Shackleton was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service for his work across Afghanistan.

The 47-year-old's recent religious experiences are a world away from watching his father as a parish minister in St Francis in the East church in East Glasgow.

Padre Shackleton swapped pews for patrol bases during his six months working with colleagues from 45 Cdo Royal Marines.

On several occasions he was forced to improvise.

The father-of-two said: "I can recall three occasions where I was asked to baptise people in the field, including one instance where I only had a water bottle.

"The temperature was boiling so it seemed appropriate. I blessed the water bottle and poured the water

over him. He was very grateful."

Padre Shackleton passed the demanding RM Commando course in 1993 – minus the weapons training – and has worked in Afghanistan three times.

He says his last tour has left him with more hope than previous visits. He said:

"I've not seen so many reasons to be positive as I saw on Herrick 14. There was a real feeling of exchange between the faiths which you don't hear about.

"The Muslim elders called me their equivalent – their bald Mullah."

Shackleton was praised for galvanising and inspiring his troops in the district of Nad-e-Ali.

He went out on foot patrols in searing temperatures and shouldered his own share of risk.

He said: "Ultimately I wanted to be there with my guys.

"There are rules which govern the Naval Chaplaincy Service which mean I can't go to the

riskiest areas, but beyond that I wanted to do as much as possible."

The Padre, who came to be nicknamed the 'Roving Rev' returned to Naval Service after a two-year stint running a Scottish parish in Dundee and is now based at Royal Marines Condor, Arbroath.

He focussed on bringing together religious leaders from all faiths.

His shura meetings were known to attract Islamic, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian worshippers, something that had happened rarely before his arrival. He said:

"I've done a PhD in the field of inter-faith relations so this was one of the most inspiring things to witness in Afghanistan.

"There will always be those who argue about what Islam is, what Christianity is, but as long as we are talking and sharing views there will be a link growing between us."

First aid – and covering fire

A ROYAL Marine who rescued a severely-wounded colleague and gave him life-saving first aid while all the time coming under fierce enemy fire has been awarded a Military Cross.

Marine Mark Williams, then 22, was on his second tour of Afghanistan when his patrol was ambushed by insurgents, who shot one of the lance corporals in the chest, leaving him lying helpless between the two opposing sides.

Taking no notice of the extreme danger he was in, Mne Williams raced out to his colleague under a hail of bullets and began treating the wounds before dragging him 30 metres to what he thought was a safer position behind a compound wall.

Yet as he continued to treat his colleague, the pair came under further attack from another firing position and, once the stricken Marine was stabilised, Mne Williams picked up his weapon and returned to

the firefight.

Under Mne Williams' accurate and fierce shooting skills the insurgents retreated, allowing a helicopter to land and transfer the casualty to Camp Bastion hospital where the medical team were in no doubt that Mne Williams had saved his colleague's life.

The lance corporal had been hit by machine gun fire and had been losing a significant amount of blood.

Mne Williams' citation stated that he displayed 'enormous strength of character, bravery and coolness of thought' by acting quickly to save the life of a fellow Marine.

His 'selflessness, valour and tenacity in the face of a determined enemy' were recognised as exceptional given his rank and limited experience.

Mne Williams, of 30 Commando, is based at Stonehouse Barracks in Plymouth

Exploding grenades failed to stop medic



Helmand commander honoured

THE officer who led the Royal Marines in Helmand last year has been made a CBE.

Maj Gen Ed Davis, who was head of 3 Commando Brigade, led thousands of British troops during a period of uncertainty and change.

Now Commandant General Royal Marines – the service's professional head – he oversaw an increase in pace in the transition of security from ISAF forces to Afghans.

As Commander of Task Force Helmand the then Brigadier showed strong leadership and a deft touch for the challenges British forces faced.

His citation stated: "His ability to combine his thoughtful, inclusive style with bold and robust decision-making makes Davis a leader of the highest order."

In the course of Herrick 14 last year 48-year-old Davis had to show the ability to balance highly-explosive strike operations with the handling of complex tribal dynamics.

He was praised for leaving a strong legacy.

A WOUNDED Royal Navy medic who saved the lives of colleagues after they were seriously injured in Afghanistan following a grenade attack has been awarded a Military Cross for his bravery.

Despite shrapnel wounds to his leg and face, MA Liam O'Grady ran across open ground while grenades were exploding around him to drag his stricken patrol commander to safety.

He gave immediate lifesaving treatment to the commander, who had severe wounds to his chest and abdomen, before going on to stabilise four other wounded colleagues.

Only after the commander had been extracted by helicopter and he had helped carry a further three casualties 800 metres uphill through hostile territory did MA O'Grady allow his own wounds to be treated.

According to his citation the medic, currently based at HMS Sultan in Gosport, displayed 'exemplary gallantry, selflessness and devotion to duty'.

His 'instinctive bravery and total disregard for his own safety, followed by exceptional handling of a mass-casualty situation as a lone medic while wounded and under threat of further attack', undoubtedly saved the life of his patrol commander.

The 21-year-old had been in the Royal Navy for just two years when he was sent on his first deployment to Afghanistan and attached to a patrol occupying Checkpoint Richka, a tiny compound in the Green Zone of the Upper Gereshk Valley.

On May 3 2011 insurgents

launched seven grenades into the compound – the first to disable the sentry and then the rest to inflict maximum wounding of the remaining personnel.

MA O'Grady reported the first explosion over the radio before rushing to treat the wounded, despite his colleagues shouting to warn him of further attacks.

While the patrol's Second-in-Command organised the remainder of the team to fire back at insurgents, MA O'Grady attended to the wounded with coolness and professionalism

despite the risk of further injury to himself.

Following the helicopter evacuation, MA O'Grady helped move the remaining casualties out of the checkpoint and walked 800 metres uphill at night through difficult terrain amid the risk of further attack or an IED blast.

After he had handed his casualties over to the Company Medical Post he received medical treatment for wounds to his leg before insisting that he go back to serve at Richka.

Linguist praised

A NAVAL rating has received recognition for outstanding work as a linguist whilst on operations in Iraq.

AB Bruce Morley, an interpreter in the Arabic dialect, distinguished himself over five operational tours with both the Royal Navy and the British Army.

In recognition of his meritorious service the junior rate was awarded a Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QVCS).

His most recent tour of duty required him to work as the Royal Navy's vital contact with the Iraqi Navy, utilising his tact, diplomacy and ability to understand the cultural world in which he was operating.

Based in the Iraqi Naval Base at Umm Qasr as a principal UK interpreter, AB Morley played a vital role in ensuring military commanders from the RN and the Iraqi Navy were able to communicate effectively and work closely together.

Not only did AB Morley distinguish himself as an interpreter for senior commanders, but he also completed more than 30 combat logistic patrols.

Supporting the delivery of essential supplies for military operations, AB Morley's skills proved invaluable in negotiating border crossings into Kuwait, often in hostile and dangerous circumstances.

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SDU2's plume in marvellous Easter

AN IMPRESSIVE plume of water and mud was thrown up marking the explosive demise of a German wartime mine – sent to kingdom come on Easter Sunday by Royal Navy divers.

The German GC mine, usually dropped by parachute and containing some 1,500lb of high explosive, was caught in the nets of a fishing vessel and then placed on the sea bed off Sheerness to be dealt with by the Navy's bomb disposal experts.

It was one of two pieces of old ordnance neutralised by the four-man team from Southern Diving Unit 2 on Horsea Island on Easter Day.

They also successfully blew up an Allied 1,000lb bomb found in the sea some four miles off Margate.

Both of those bombs went bang, not so the most unusual bit of ordnance which the divers have had to contend with this past month.

Just before Easter, the SDU2 team was called out to the mud off Harwich where remnants of a German V2 rocket were discovered in the Stour estuary.

A 4ft-long section of the World War 2 weapon was pulled from mudflats, with the Army's 101 Engineer Regiment working alongside the RN divers in a two-day operation.

They had first excavated around the lowest part of the V2 to discover that the warhead section was not there – meaning there was no safety risk to the local population.

The venturi section of the rocket – named after the effect on a fluid passing through a narrow pipe – was subsequently recovered, although the divers were sceptical at first that they were dealing with one of Hitler's rockets.

A V2 plunged to earth at more than twice the speed of sound having reached heights of up to 128 miles above the earth's surface – so normally there was nothing left of them.

"Our guys had never seen anything like this before and probably never will again. It was a very unusual beast indeed," said Lt Dan Herridge, Officer-in-Command of SDU 2.

"This was a successful result to the operation and means people using the waterways and living locally can have confidence that this was not a dangerous piece of ordnance."

The recovered section of the V2 could now be donated to the nearby sailing club whose vessels have passed it buried in the mud for the past seven decades.

'gale force wins

PARTIALLY obscured by the ominous South Atlantic mist and cloud, this is the inappropriately-named Nightingale Island (for there are none of the eponymous birds on these couple of square miles of volcanic rock).

There are, however, an estimated one million sea birds who breed on this lush but remote outpost of empire, some 24 miles south-southwest of Tristan da Cunha: Atlantic yellow-nosed albatrosses, rockhopper penguins, great shearwaters.

Approaching Nightingale Island (the name comes from an 18th-Century seafarer) is Her Majesty's Ship Montrose.

And in visiting this rocky outcrop, her quest – to visit every one of Britain's overseas territories in the South Atlantic – is now complete.

The frigate departed Devonport with the aspiration of seeing some of the most remote places where the Union Flag flies in the Southern Hemisphere.

And the last of these on her extensive travels were the cluster of isles around Tristan da Cunha – often described as the most remote inhabited island on earth: the Cape of Good Hope is 1,730 miles to the east, Port Stanley 2,400 miles to the west, St Helena 1,500 miles to the north.

It is smaller than Bristol – just under 38 square miles – and dominated by Queen Mary's Peak volcano, in whose shadow some 275 British citizens live, mostly in the 'capital' on the northern shore, Edinburgh of the South Seas.

Many of those 275 souls turned out to wave at Montrose – for with a heavy swell, five-metre seas and strong winds, the frigate was prevented from putting her sea boat into the water and sending a small party ashore. Instead, she restricted her 'visit' to a sail past.

On her voyage east to South Africa, the frigate sailed past another isle in the archipelago, Gough Island, 250 miles away, but did not pass Tristan itself.



That was put right as the Type 23 made the return journey across the South Atlantic – although the visit wasn't purely a case of flying the flag.

The island is entirely self-sufficient, making use of the plentiful supply of crayfish in the surrounding waters as its main source of revenue.

The significance of that fishing industry provided the perfect opportunity for Montrose to be of assistance; following a request from the island's administrator, the frigate carried out a circumnavigation (Tristan's roughly 23 miles in diameter) before patrolling the fishing grounds to monitor activity.

Patrol done, it was time to sail past and acknowledge the turn-out from the islanders.

"This has been another unique opportunity for Montrose – we've now succeeded in our aim to visit all of the British Overseas Territories in the South Atlantic," said the frigate's Commanding Officer Cdr Jonathan Lett.

"Since leaving Plymouth in October we've covered a significant proportion of the South Atlantic – from Ascension Island in the north right down to the edge of the Antarctic ice.

"We've been fortunate enough to experience a wide range of unique and unspoiled locations – all the time promoting British interests through our continuous presence in the region."

For the record, the other sovereign territories visited by the ship on her six-month deployment were Ascension Island, St Helena, the Falklands, South Georgia and, even closer to Antarctica, the South Sandwich Islands.

Things have now, thankfully, warmed up for Montrose; after passing through the Panama Canal, the frigate was due in New Orleans as *Navy News* went to press for a week of 200th anniversary commemorations marking the battle for the city during the War of 1812.



Farewell, hoofing Luke

HUGELY-experienced Royal Marine Sgt Luke Taylor was one of two Britons shot dead at the front gate of the main base in Lashkar Gah.

The 33-year-old NCO from Bournemouth died alongside L/Cpl Michael Foley, of the Adjutant General's Corps, gunned down by a rogue Afghan soldier.

Sgt Taylor joined the Royal Marines in 1997. Over the course of his impressive career, he gathered extensive operational experience doing a job that he loved.

He was regarded by fellow green berets as a modest and capable senior NCO, liked and respected by everyone he worked with and was always committed to doing everything he could to assist his comrades in arms. His generous and compassionate nature made him a very popular member of the Corps.

He married in 2008 and leaves behind his beloved wife, Nicola, and their young son, Roan.

He was a devoted husband and father, and often talked of his family back in the UK.

His Commanding Officer said: "Always an absolute pleasure to work with, you knew that Sergeant Taylor would deliver first time, every time.

"With a wealth of experience under his belt, he was fearless and would tackle every challenge head-on with his usual charismatic but direct approach.

"I will remember him as a natural leader with inspirational flair who was devoted to his family."

A fellow sergeant in the Corps added: "Luke, a hoofing bootneck, hoofing bloke, hoofing mate. Always with a smile on your face and the ability to make us all laugh. You will be sorely missed – your friend and brother in arms."



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Block ship takes shape

ON A wet and windy day in Glasgow 132 remote-controlled transporters edged 4,000 tonnes of steel to join another giant segment of the Navy's future aircraft carrier.

In a two-hour operation one section was moved from a large ship hall at BAE Systems' Govan yard on the Clyde to join the other part of Lower Block 04, built in a neighbouring hall just 100 metres away.

Together the two sections comprise one fifth of HMS Queen Elizabeth, the first of two 65,000-tonne super-carriers being built for the fleet of tomorrow.

Lower Block 04 is home to the two main engine rooms, the sick bay and quarters for some of the 1,500 sailors and air group personnel who will serve in her later this decade.

The transporters moved the two parts to within five centimetres of each other before workers spent the subsequent few days closing the gap, precisely aligning the various units and compartments before welding the sections together.

Once fully fitted out, the completed block will weigh 11,000 tonnes and form the aft section of the carrier. It is the largest section of the ship at 86 metres long, 40 metres wide and 23 metres tall – so large it juts out of the ship hall.

"Bringing together Lower Block 04 marks the beginning of an exciting stage in the block's life," said Steven Carroll, Queen Elizabeth Class Project Director at BAE Systems.

"The team will now shift their focus back to the outfitting of the block, including installing 12,000

pipes and 100,000 kilometres of cables, ahead of her departure to Rosyth later this year."

That departure is due in the autumn; Lower Block 04 will be the last hull section of Queen Elizabeth to arrive on the Forth and will join the other units and sections of the ship in dry dock where she is being assembled.

At Govan, work also continues on the mid section of the second ship, HMS Prince of Wales. Since the first steel was cut on this section in May last year, over 80 units of LB03 are currently in production.

Half a dozen yards around the UK are involved in the carrier project, with some 10,000 people directly or indirectly involved in building sections, parts or providing equipment for what will be the largest ships ever built for Britain's Navy.

At BAE's sister yard in Portsmouth, the final work has been carried out on Lower Blocks 05 and 02 for Queen Elizabeth.

Block 05 left for Rosyth at the end of last month, 02 is due to be moved north in May – but before they leave the construction shed and are lowered on to a barge, they have to be weighed.

Carefully-positioned hydraulic jacks and sensitive load cells convert force into an electrical signal which in turn is translated into an accurate measurement of the block's weight to ensure the centre of gravity was spot on for the moves.

"We weigh each section at least three times to make sure the readings are accurate," explained Paul Bowsher of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance.

Defender gears up for Pompey debut

AS HMS Dauntless begins her active life in earnest, the fourth of her five sisters, Defender, is almost ready to make her debut in Portsmouth.

D36 is now in the final weeks of trials and tests on the Clyde having come through her second sea period – nearly four weeks of advanced sea trials off Western Scotland – with flying colours.

Defender put to sea for her first sea trials last autumn, sailing two years to the day of her launch to tested the basics – engines, power, manoeuvrability.

As with those inaugural trials, Defender's second trials period saw a mixed crew from her builders BAE Systems, plus the growing band of Royal Navy personnel assigned to her, give her a thorough run-out.

It was a cold and fresh March morning as HMS Defender slipped from the Scotstoun jetty and snaked her way down the Clyde once again.

After a few sea safety trials which all went well, the ship quickly knuckled down to manoeuvring and power and propulsion trials before the crux of the renewed spell at sea: combat systems.

The team aboard attuned all the various weapons and sensor sub-systems to the main command system – the brains of Defender where all the information is fused to give the operations room team the complete picture.

The trials were also great a opportunity for old and new members of the ship's company to become more familiar with the ship – there are 777 compartments aboard, that's more than four for every one of a typical crew of 190 – and her systems but more importantly it allowed quality time to build on the fighting spirit already developed whilst alongside on the Clyde.

"It is a great privilege to be serving as the weapon engineer officer in HMS Defender these trials marked another significant step to not only acceptance of the ship by the Royal Navy but success on operations in the future," said Lt Cdr Jonathan Pearce.

"Defender boasts extremely impressive capability throughout her decks which was tuned to optimum performance over the trials period."

The ship is affiliated to Glasgow and Exeter and her second time at sea gave her mixed ship's company the chance to help out good causes in those cities.

Horse racing nights, an Ironman competition (athletics, not the film...), bingo and quizzes helped net a cool £1,500 for Kelbourne School for physically-impaired youngsters aged two to 12 in Glasgow, Dream-a-Way Holidays in Exeter which organises holidays for people in the West Country with disabilities, and BAE's favoured charity, Erskine Hospital.

THERE is something rather wistful about this photograph of a flotilla of yachts, fishing boats and tugs shepherding a Type 45 destroyer into the Solent.

This is HMS Dauntless beginning her maiden deployment on a bright but chilly spring morning.

Britain's second Type 45 is spending the next six months mostly in the Southern Hemisphere as she takes over from HMS Montrose.

There was a sizeable crowd crammed on to the Round Tower brandishing flags and good luck banners to witness Dauntless' departure.

And given the 30th anniversary of the beginning of the Falklands conflict the very week Dauntless

sailed, and considerable tension between London and Buenos Aires over the islands' future, there was sizeable media interest in D33's departure – it was broadcast live by the BBC while a couple of helicopters buzzed around overhead (including one from Sky News).

Despite such interest and not a little wild speculation in Fleet Street, Dauntless' first deployment is a routine stint south of the equator.

The opening hours of her deployment were anything but routine as she came to the aid of an ill yachtsman off Plymouth.

Dauntless picked up a mayday from the sailing vessel Leopard which was

close to Eddystone Lighthouse, off Plymouth, and dispatched her sea boat.

The destroyer's doctor, Surg Lt Elizabeth Shaw, determined that the 45-year-old yachtsman was in need of urgent medical assistance – it's believed he suffered a seizure.

The decision was taken to fly the casualty to hospital using a Sea King from 771 NAS at Culdrose – but with rough seas, it was deemed safer to winch him from one of Dauntless's boats rather than attempt it from the yacht.

Which was done with the calmness and professionalism one would expect from well-honed front-line RN unit: from distress

call to helicopter flight (which transported the sailor to Derriford hospital in Plymouth) the whole incident lasted just 45 minutes.

"We were very fortunate to be in the right place at the right time and am grateful to my team for their swift and professional reactions.," said CO Capt Will Warrender. "This is exactly the type of scenario they are trained to deal with."

As for Dauntless' first tour of duty, she'll maintain a continuous presence protecting British interests in the South Atlantic and fly the flag for the UK – and the Type 45 programme.

She was due to take part in her first major exercise with numerous foreign navies, Saharan Express, off Senegal as we went to press.

Picture: LA(Phot) Maxine Davies, FRPU East




Shareen Franklyn

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The fire and the fury

IF YOU'RE a gunner there's no more satisfying a sight than 46lb of steel and thunder leaving the muzzle of a 4.5in gun.

Or seeing streaks of tracer racing through the night like pearl beads towards their target.

By day and night guns of HMS York and 847 Naval Air Squadron fired for effect on the range at Cape Wrath – the northwesternmost tip of the British mainland.

The Commando fliers and Portsmouth-based destroyer let rip on Exercise Spring Wrath, several days of pummeling targets on land and at sea around the British Isles.

Apart from her Sea Dart missiles – the destroyer's main armament – and the pistols and SA80 rifles used by individual sailors, York fired off every weapon: 4.5in gun, Miniguns, machine-guns, Phalanx Gatling gun. Quite a lot of gunnery funnery.

York is in the final months of her 28-year-career (she's due to pay off this autumn), but remains at high readiness to deploy for any eventuality.

She was due to replace HMS Liverpool off Libya last year, but was recalled when the fighting in North Africa ended.

The Crazy Red Chicken's seven-month stint off Libya underlined the importance of Naval Gunfire Support.

To that end, York embarked three student principal warfare officers and put to sea for some gunbusting.

Her first task was to prove her 4.5in 'Kryten' gun. "One of the main challenges for myself and my team was always going to be giving the command a fully-serviceable, functioning gun as and when required. We

knew that there would be a few late nights and early mornings in the days ahead," explained CPO Montgomery, the gun's maintainer.

Freshly-briefed and prepped by LS (AWW) Austin (one of the two gun controllers onboard) the ship carried out a muzzle velocity calibration providing an accurate wear measurement of the gun barrel to assist with the calculation of ballistics.

With the maths done, the ship's Lynx was sent aloft to spot and the gun blazed away at buoy targets on the Lulworth range off the Dorset coast.

After two days of shooting, all three hopeful warfare officers were deemed competent enough to proceed on to the main objective, conducting live firing at the Cape Wrath ranges.

As well as sending in the high-explosive crowdpleasers, York also found herself firing star shells – something which until last year's operations off Libya had been removed from gunnery and warfare courses.

With that in mind York was also ready on the gunline to provide co-ordinated illumination when called for by the spotters ashore – and overhead.

Key to Spring Wrath was support from 148 (Meiktila) Commando Forward Observation Battery Royal Artillery, naval gunfire liaison officers and the Lynx of 847 NAS (more from them in a mo...).

The destroyer arrived off Cape Wrath in the small hours and immediately started patrolling her gunline, waiting for instructions.

When the range opened, the orders from the spotters came in thick and fast to LS(AWT) 'Taff' Matthews, York's Naval Gunfire Support communications specialist in her ops room.

"The operations room quickly digested the information and provided professional naval



● Eriboll swift sword... An 847 Lynx makes its way to the range

gunfire aiding in qualifying a number of spotter students on the ground," Taff said.

"As the day went on we compiled more complex fire plans incorporating Royal Marines Lynx pilots from 847 NAS.

"Each fire plan was a success with accurate and professional gunfire neutralising the targets." York was called on to conduct various fire missions with corrections given by the trainee spotters on an 'add one, change one' basis; each mission was allocated six to eight rounds of high explosive 4.5in shell.

"This period on York has been the perfect end to our PWO course; the ship's company have been brilliant and we've all enjoyed watching Lt Lindley smash the Fleet Standard Time – first round away within two minutes of the call for fire," said Lt Cdr Jason White, one of the warfare students aboard the destroyers.

"The new simulator is great for teaching but it is nothing like a real ship's ops room.

"Naval Fire Support has always been a core skill, however, Op Ellamy has reinvigorated it and shown its continued importance in modern conflicts."

By the time Spring Wrath came to an end, 239 shells had left the barrel of York's Kryten, the highlight being the co-

ordinated illumination serials where the ship fired star shell and high explosive rounds.

Mother Nature played her part as spotters ashore 'checked fire' when the Scottish weather and visibility began to deteriorate.

"As proven recently off Libya, gunfire support from Royal Navy warships is as valid today as ever," said York's CO Cdr Rex Cox.

"But it's also a perishable skill and one which we need to exercise regularly if we are to be ready when called upon.

"Exercise Spring Wrath has been a cracking opportunity to put York's team and equipment through their paces as well as endorsing new principal warfare officers for the front line."

All of which would have been rather less fulfilling for the Yorkies without the presence of three Lynx and 40 supporting personnel who decamped from their usual home in Somerset to Sutherland to hone their gunnery and spotting skills with a tour of duty in Afghanistan looming – and help the guns of the Fleet and RAF flex their muscles.

By day the squadron – one of three front-line units in the Commando Helicopter Force – helped direct the fire of York's Kryten and practised their own marksmanship with the green and grey Lynx's machine-gun.

When night fell, the

helicopters were aloft again for more door gunning (the 7.62mm general purpose machine gun is fitted at the side of the Lynx).

And like the Type 42 prowling off Cape Wrath, the aircrew were aided by the specialists of 148 Battery who guided their efforts – not least with some laser targeting by night.

For added firepower, RAF Tornados from Lossiemouth also joined in Spring Wrath for 'shows of force', bolstering the close air support offered by the 847 Lynx.

Before there could be any thought of such fire and fury, however, the 847 team had to refine their spotting skills, courtesy of the Invertron – a gunnery simulator at RM Poole.

From there they spent a day on York to see the gunnery and command systems and talk with the sailors they'd be working with off Cape Wrath.

Then there was the small matter of getting to the remote range. It took three days to move the bulk of the equipment and most of the 40 personnel in the detachment from 847's home at RNAS Yeovilton to Cape Wrath – a journey of 700 miles.

Once in Scotland, the detachment established itself around Loch Eriboll, a dozen or so miles east of Cape Wrath and once an anchorage of great battleships.

To add to the realism of the week-long training, the detachment established a helicopter landing site – basically a forward 'airfield' – where the Lynx were refuelled and maintained by the team of engineers and armourers, with guards posted around the clock to safeguard the site.

The engineering team was required to provide two serviceable aircraft daily for Spring Wrath – and did so.

"The squadron engineers did a fantastic job – any minor problems were remedied quickly, allowing for three aircraft available almost constantly. This is no mean

feat when one considers the remoteness of our location," said Sub Lt Alex Lovell-Smith.

As for those in the air, a number of 847 personnel qualified as Naval Gunfire Support Air Observers – and an even larger number were able to hone their door gunnery skills.

The training should serve the personnel well on Operation Herrick – but also in the longer term 847 have at least one eye on the arrival of Wildcat, the successor to the existing Lynx Mk7 (distinguishable from its maritime versions by the landing skids and camouflaged livery). Naval gunfire support, close air support and forward deployment are all key skills which will be required of Wildcat air and ground crews when it enters service in a couple of years.

"All in all this was a very successful exercise," said pilot Sub Lt Lovell-Smith. "At all levels, everyone had a smile on their face by the end of the week."

"It was an excellent bonding opportunity for the squadron – and also a chance to re-kindle some traditional 847 roles – namely naval gunfire support, a skill which is practised more rarely than others."

"The flying was eye-opening – most notably in the Scottish Highlands, where you constantly have to have one eye on the weather."

Major Nick Venn RM, 847's Commanding Officer, said the live-fire exercise in Scotland was "a crucial milestone" for his team.

"Spring Wrath afforded the squadron an excellent opportunity to renew their proficiency in directing naval gunfire on to land targets from battlefield helicopters," he added.

"The ability to plan and conduct joint fires, including controlling fast jets, directing artillery, mortars and spotting for naval gunfire from a Lynx Mk7 is an essential capability for amphibious operations."



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WE'VE got used to the iPod, the iPhone, the iPad.

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For the first time large numbers of Naval personnel got an idea of what it's like to fly the next-generation jet for the Fleet Air Arm when a cockpit demonstrator of the F35 Joint Strike Fighter rolled into HMS Excellent.

The demonstrator features a replica cockpit with genuine F35 controls and displays – and three large computer screens to recreate the world around the jet.

The big screens aren't a world away from what you might find in a video arcade.

But the cockpit itself, well...

"People don't believe that this is the real cockpit. They ask: what will it look like for real?" says Lt Cdr Simon Rawlins, F35 staff officer at Navy Command – and pictured right in the demonstrator.

"This is the real thing."

Their incredulity is understandable. For anyone used to the 'analogue' world of dials, knobs and buttons, the F35 cockpit is space age – such things are minimal. In the place of a traditional instrument panel is a giant touch-screen display the width of the cockpit – which can show as much, or as little, as the pilot wants.

"All the displays that you'd normally have that take up superfluous space only appear if something has gone wrong with them," says Lt Cdr Rawlins. "Most of the time, I only see what I actually need – and that increases my situational awareness."

In addition to the hi-tech new display panel, pilots must also grasp the concept of 360° visibility provided by cutting-edge helmets. Six cameras positioned around the jet cover every angle, and the image projected into the helmet means the pilot can look through his or her feet to see what's below or through the back of their seat to 'check their six'; they still have to physically move their heads to do so, but otherwise all potential blind spots

are gone.

And unlike the Harrier with weapons slung between wings and fuselage, to improve the stealth of the F35 its arsenal is held in a bay. There's a rather uncanny feeling of waiting three seconds for the bay to open after pressing the trigger, before a missile races towards its target.

If you score an air-to-air kill, a small box plunges to earth on the heads-up display as confirmation – just in case the pilot didn't see it.

The demonstrator went on a two-week tour of Navy, RAF and BAE sites to give fast jet pilots a glimpse of what they might be flying in a few years' time, and to give other personnel, engineers, programmers and designers an insight into what they're working towards.

For the F35 – also known as the Lightning II – is a mammoth project. It might be assembled by Lockheed Martin on a mile-long production line at their Fort Worth works in Texas, but roughly one-seventh of the strike fighter is being built in the UK, with an estimated 25,000 people working on components, parts and systems.

The very first British F35, production model BK1, took to the skies for the first time last month. In the hands of Lockheed test pilot Bill Gigliotti it made a 45-minute flight for a series of checks and tests.

BK1 is the short take-off/vertical landing (STOVL) variant of the F35 which may – or may not – fly from the decks of HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales later this decade.

Britain plumped for this 'jump jet' version, the F35B, but following 2010's Strategic Defence and Security Review decided instead on the traditional carrier version of the Joint Strike Fighter, the F35C, which will be launched by catapult and caught on the deck as it lands using arrestor wires – although there has been intense media speculation that the UK might revert to the original STOVL version.

That doesn't substantially affect the test models because the combat and

mission systems of the different F35 variants are all-but identical, so British aviators will be using BK-1 as a crucial learning experience. The same goes for the cockpit demonstrator.

Joint Strike Fighter will be Britain's first fifth-generation jet (Meteors were 'first generation'; the Harrier is 'third generation'; Tornados fourth, Typhoons are 'generation 4.5') which means for former jump jet pilots like Lt Cdr Rawlins, it's a big leap.

"It's like going from a cassette player to an iPad – it's great," he enthuses.

"As an aircraft, it's easier to fly than a Harrier, but the systems are much harder. The Harrier was great at the time. I loved flying it, but you cannot compare it with the F35."

There is, says former US Air Force F16 pilot, Tony Stutts "nothing out there that is anything like this in terms of fighter jets."

He flew combat missions over the Balkans in the 1990s, including knocking out radar targeting American jets and is now Lockheed's simulator test director.

While he has seen the younger generation quickly pick up the basics of the F35 cockpit and systems – if not the tactics – he's been impressed by how swiftly veteran aviators have got to grips with the fifth-generation fighter.

"We had an F4 Phantom pilot from Turkey who picked it up in a couple of days," he explains. "These are people who are highly attuned to these sorts of things."

Which bodes well for some of the younger Fleet Air Arm Harrier pilots still in the Service who are hoping to have a crack at flying the Joint Strike Fighter.

"The challenge for pilots of the future is about systems and information management, developing their capacity for handling all the information, rather than physical handling of the aircraft," says Lt Cdr Rawlins.

"The skills the pilot of the future need will be more than traditional stick and rudder."

Picture: Ian Hargreaves/Portsmouth News



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● Cross country skiing on Adelaide Island during the Rothera 'winter Olympics'
Pictures: LA(phot) Arron Hoare

True colours

ANTARCTICA might conjure up a mental image of a harsh white wasteland, but there was a palette of vivid colours when the Royal Navy's ice patrol ship ventured further south than ever before.

There was the distinctive red hull of HMS Protector.

There was certainly plenty of white – snow, ice and the white horses of a choppy Southern Ocean.

And there was the deep blue of the weird, beautiful ice caves of Adelaide Island, visited by the ship's Royal Marines Commandos.

Protector visited the island to deliver vital supplies to Rothera Research Station – the largest British Antarctic Survey (BAS) base and the centre of its research effort on the frozen continent.

In doing so, the Portsmouth-based icebreaker ventured to her most southerly point yet – 67°34'S, or nearly 800 miles from Cape Horn, the southernmost tip of the Americas.

Protector was asked to deliver aviation fuel – always a potentially-hazardous task, but one made more challenging given the conditions so far south.

The ship had to pump 168 cubic metres of fuel ashore at a rate of 15 cubic metres an hour – that's 15,000 litres (3,300 gallons) every 60 minutes, or enough fuel to fill up more than 270 Ford Focuses.

That had to be done in temperatures of -15°C, and with Protector herself rolling heavily.

For even though she was berthed at a jetty at the research station, the swell on the ocean was so heavy that she rolled seven degrees to port and starboard – enough to keep her ship's company in watches in case there was an emergency.

Thankfully there wasn't, and with the delivery made, the sailors and marines could explore Rothera Station and the island – Adelaide is 12 times the size of the Isle of Wight – not least thanks to her BV206s.

Three of the all-terrain tracked vehicles were craned ashore, first to provide a backdrop for a ship's company photograph, then to allow some roaming.

Two dozen of the crew took part in a 'winter Olympics' with the BAS team – and promptly beat the scientists and support staff on their own 'turf'.

The event, whose highlight was the cross-country ski race, was played out against the stunning backdrop of the Adelaide mountains.

"It was a truly amazing experience," enthused Protector's dentist Surg Lt Jenna Murgatroyd.

"The awe-inspiring backdrop to the games made for a perfect afternoon to try something new on the ice – this was a unique opportunity I will not forget."

On the final day of the Rothera

Station visit the Royal Marines, aboard the survey ship as cold weather experts, took part in some crevassing supervised by the BAS polar guides and Sgt Ian Freeman, the ship's mountain leader.

"Once we were down in the crevasse it was a truly mind-blowing experience," said Mne Thomas Lemar.

"It was like being in Superman's secret lair with huge ice crystals shooting out in every direction, reflecting light in deep vibrant blues."

Fellow green beret Cpl Shane Carle added: "The obstacles we came across weren't anything too difficult at first glance but when you are inside an ice cavern everything is automatically made ten times harder."

"Every time we overcame an obstacle we were rewarded with a new breath-taking sight. One of the most memorable chambers we entered was through the smallest hole you have ever seen."

"Unfortunately not everyone was able to get through this hole. Steve, the BAS instructor, was the first down and shouted up to tell us that one larger man would have to miss this one out!"

The visit culminated in an awards ceremony on board the ship with a rather optimistic – given the sub-zero temperatures – but well-received barbecue.

Festivities were cut short by the weather. With the sea still lumpy, Protector was moved away from the jetty, far enough to prevent damage to her side – but it also meant the BAS staff had to leave early.

The BAS, a component of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), undertakes work which is regarded as being in the van of polar research in the world.

Its science and support staff based in Cambridge, in Antarctica and the Arctic, undertake research that uses the polar regions to

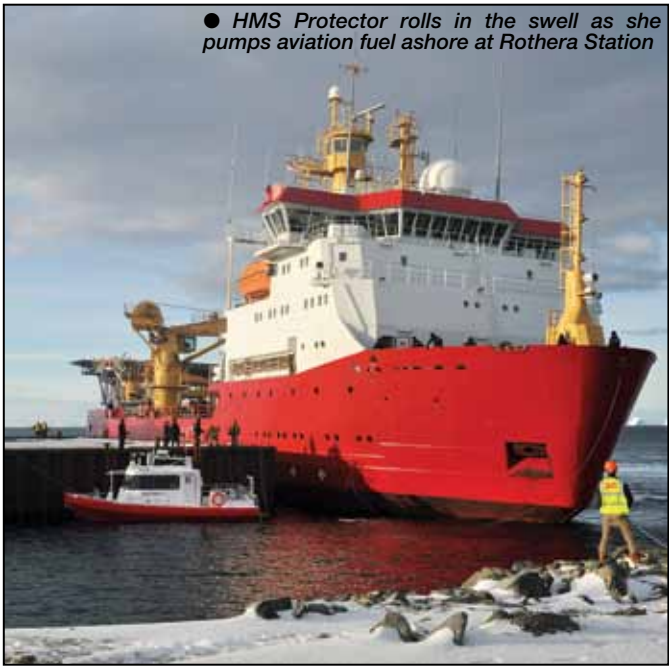
advance our understanding of Earth as a sustainable planet.

With the visit to Rothera done, Protector sailed north to begin the long journey back to the UK.

It took her through a particularly narrow and poorly-surveyed area known as the Gullet; the charts in use – the only ones available – were woefully out of date.

It meant that at times Protector was forced to navigate on what had been charted as land 150 years ago to avoid the large ice cliffs at the water's edge.

The ship, however, is used to this; the bridge team coolly executed a very demanding navigation serial safely and soon guided her to her next tasking at the US Palmer Station, Arthur Harbour, Antarctica.



● HMS Protector rolls in the swell as she pumps aviation fuel ashore at Rothera Station



● Royal Marines crevassing in ice caves on Adelaide Island



● HMS Protector off Adelaide Island



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with all who serve

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION





| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Armada..... | 1588 |
| Cadiz..... | 1596 |
| Portland..... | 1653 |
| Gabbard..... | 1653 |
| Lowestoft..... | 1665 |
| Orfordness..... | 1666 |
| Schooneveld..... | 1673 |
| Texel..... | 1673 |
| Barfleur..... | 1692 |
| Ushant..... | 1747 |
| 'Santa Dorotea'..... | 1798 |
| 'Guillaume Tell'..... | 1800 |
| Java..... | 1811 |
| Heligoland..... | 1914 |
| Dogger Bank..... | 1915 |
| Jutland..... | 1916 |

Motto: *Concordant nomine facta* – the facts agree with the name

Class: Lion-class battle-cruiser
Builder: Devonport dockyard
Laid down: November 29 1909

Launched: August 6 1910
Commissioned: June 4 1912
Displacement: 26,270 tons
Length: 700ft
Beam: 88ft 6in
Draught: 32ft 5in
Speed: 28 knots
Complement: 1,092
Propulsion: 42 Yarrow boilers powering four-shaft Parsons direct-drive steam turbines
Armament: 4 x twin 13½in Mk V gun; 16 x 4in Mk VII guns; 2 x MkII torpedo tubes
Armour: Belt 4-9in; bulkheads 4in; barbettes 8-9in; turrets 9in; decks 2½in; conning tower 10in

The cat that was mauled

TRAILING a thick black plume of smoke across the grey wastes of the North Sea, this is His Majesty's Ship Lion around the moment she was almost fatally wounded at Jutland.

In the fug and smoke it's hard to tell whether Q turret and its two 13½in guns have been hit.

But the guns of the German battle-cruiser SMS Lützow have the range of the flagship of Vice Admiral Sir David Beatty's 1st Battle-cruiser Squadron – a huge fountain of water towers amidships (just behind Q turret).

For a little over half an hour on the afternoon of May 31 1916 the two ships traded deadly blows as the battle-cruisers of the British and German Navy's clashed in the opening 'round' of what would be the greatest naval battle ever fought in European waters.

The duel between Beatty's six ships and the five *Großer Kreuzern* – bigger cruisers, as the Germans called their counterparts to Britain's battle-cruisers – of Franz von Hipper's 1st Scouting Group would be the ultimate test of Jackie Fisher's

'fast battleship' concept.

The battle-cruiser embodied Fisher's two passions: speed and firepower. The speed of a cruiser, the punch of his new all-big-gun battleships. Speed came at a price however – considerably less armour than the battleships.

The battle-cruisers were never meant to engage enemy capital ships. They were to scout ahead, to blow slower, less powerful traditional cruisers out of the water, to pursue and wound a fleeing foe.

But just as the navies of the world built their own dreadnoughts to match the Royal Navy's Dreadnought, so some copied the battle-cruiser concept – not least Germany's *Großer Kreuzern*.

The two battle-cruiser forces first met in battle at Dogger Bank in early 1915, a confused and confusing affair which left Lion severely damaged.

There were many lessons of Dogger Bank, not least that British gunnery was woeful (Lion scored four hits out of 243 13½in shells fired), German ships were tough nuts to crack (the cruiser Blücher, when she succumbed, had taken 70 hits) and that a British battle-cruiser could take considerable punishment (Lion suffered 16 hits but lost only one



man killed).

The greatest lesson at Dogger Bank was learned by the Germans: the dangers of 'flash' – fire spreading from a turret to its lower chambers and, ultimately, the magazine. Only flooding the magazine had saved the Seydlitz.

And only such an action would save HMS Lion 14 months later.

For among the very first hits scored by the Lützow, one landed on Q turret. Part of the roof was thrown

500ft in the air, while a sheet of flame raced up past the height of the main mast.

The turret's commander, Major Francis Harvey RM lost both his legs, but with his dying breath ordered the magazine flooded before the inferno could spread. It saved the Lion.

There was no Francis Harvey aboard HMS Indefatigable or Queen Mary. The former blew up two minutes after Lion's near fatal hit, the latter 20 minutes later. The cause

in both cases: fire spreading to their magazines.

Despite her wounds, Lion scored four hits on the Lützow, which was subsequently scuttled – after taking a terrible pounding from HMS Invincible.

Invincible shared the fate of Indefatigable and Queen Mary. Lion survived. She took 14 hits at Jutland for the cost of 99 men. They were buried at sea as the ship made her way back to Rosyth.

All that was left of Francis Harvey was "a charred piece of humanity", found close to the voice pipe where he had given the order to flood the magazine.

With Lion's chaplain dead, Beatty took over the funeral service – but emotions were too raw and his flag captain, Ernle Chatfield, concluded proceedings. The White Ensign flew at half mast as the strains of *Abide With Me* drifted over the water as Lion committed her dead to the deep.

Main picture: Imperial War Museum SP 1706



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

SOME figures are remembered for posterity thanks to opportune – or inopportune – soundbites.

There's Marie Antoinette's "let them eat cake". George V's "Bugger Bognor." Yamamoto awakening his "sleeping giant".

All of which are apocryphal.

If Joe Public in 2012 remembers David Beatty at all, then it's for his laconic observation at Jutland. "There seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today."

It's not apocryphal. And it's entirely in keeping with the man, pictured right by the pioneering Royal Navy photographer Lt Ernest Brooks visiting the Headquarters of the British Expeditionary Force at Montreuil in northern France in WW1.

In this anniversary month of the great North Sea battle, our delve into the photographic archive of the Imperial War Museum has rooted out a couple of unusual 'portraits' of a man labelled 'the last naval hero' by his biographer.

Certainly there's no commander in the past century of Royal Navy history who cuts a figure quite like David Beatty.

He was frequently compared with Nelson – a comparison not entirely without merit.

Beatty's private life was complicated (married to one woman, in love with another already wed). He was the youngest admiral since Nelson, and like the hero of Trafalgar, he was wounded in his arm in action – in Beatty's case shot in the left arm during the Boxer Rebellion in China. He shrugged off his injuries, rejoined his men and helped with the relief of British forces.

Nelson's affairs – personal and naval – were played out in the public eye. He courted the media of the day. Beatty shunned it. He had no time for journalists. "They think only of good copy and that's all I'm fit for," he fumed after one "puffed up" biography appeared in the press in 1913.

But then David Beatty was "good copy". His deeds in China brought rapid promotion: a captain at the age of just 29 – nearly 15 years younger than most of his peers. By 39, he was an admiral, having impressed no less a person than Prince Louis of Battenberg – a future First Sea Lord.

He impressed Winston Churchill, the equally-youthful First Lord of the Admiralty. He liked Beatty's straight-talking nature and sharp brain – he was never top of the class, but he did have the capacity to grasp information in an instant and, far ahead of his time, "thought of war problems in their unity by land, sea and air".

When Beatty's career was rather in the doldrums in 1911, it was Churchill who first offered him a post in the Admiralty and then, in the spring of 1913, command of the Battle-cruiser Squadron "over the heads of all".

It was among the most coveted posts in the



Fleet. And in the opening months of the Great War, it would bring David Beatty national adulation.

He was hailed a hero by the press for taking the fight to the Hun – notably at Heligoland in August 1914 (although his part in the battle was somewhat secondary) and at Dogger Bank in January 1915 (where confused orders denied the Royal Navy a potentially greater victory than the solitary cruiser sunk).

But at the time, with the battle on land mired, Dogger Bank was a tonic to morale. Britain needed a hero and David Beatty fit the bill perfectly.

For four years – and more – Beatty was one of the most recognisable figures in Britain – right up there with Haig, Kitchener, the king. In the pre-Hollywood era, David Beatty was a celebrity.

There were Beatty postcards. Beatty posters. Beatty portraits and

prints. His face stared from newspapers and magazines. You could enjoy a cuppa from a Beatty mug, or admire a Beatty toby jug on your mantelpiece.

The wonderful wooden figure (pictured left, EPH 7240) you could not buy, however. It stands 6½in tall and was produced by the ship's company of HMS Queen Elizabeth, his flagship at the war's end.

Such a gift is proof of the regard in which he was held. He inspired tremendous loyalty in his closest staff, while he strove to maintain the morale and improve the welfare of the lower decks, encouraging sport, theatrical performances and shows.

Above all, David Beatty possessed a style and swagger few, if any, of his contemporaries possessed. Chief among the latter was John Jellicoe, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet – and Beatty's superior.

Before a camera, Jellicoe always looked somewhat awkward, nervous perhaps, a man burdened by tremendous responsibility – "the only man on either

side who could lose the war in an afternoon," as Churchill so succinctly put it.

David Beatty always came across more relaxed, more approachable, more personable. The cap was always sloped at a rakish angle, all but obscuring his right eye (except, evidently, when visiting the BEF HQ...). The hands were often in his pockets, even when showing the king around his men o'war.

Yet the expression captured in formal portraits – be they photographs or painting – invariably conveys arrogance, even disdain.

All of which underlines his pithy remark on the bridge of HMS Lion in the smoke and fug of the North Sea as the battle-cruisers of the Royal Navy and High Seas Fleet clashed on May 31 1916.

First Indefatigable blew up, followed 20 minutes later HMS Queen Mary. The destruction of the two battle-cruisers stacked the odds in the Germans' favour. Beatty characteristically kept up the pressure.

In the century since, Beatty's actions that Wednesday afternoon have been contested by naval officers and historians. Jutland failed to deliver a 20th-Century Trafalgar – or rather Beatty and Jellicoe failed to deliver a 20th-Century Trafalgar.

The Admiralty spent much of the following two decades split between pro-Beatty and pro-Jellicoe factions (such was the discontent that two King George V battleships laid down in the late 1930s – after the death of both admirals – were named not Jellicoe and Beatty as planned but Anson and Howe...).

On the field of battle Beatty failed. But as Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet – he succeeded Jellicoe in the aftermath of Jutland – he presided over the greatest naval victory in history as the German Navy meekly surrendered, much to Beatty's chagrin, for he desired to send the High Seas Fleet to the bottom of the North Sea – in November 1918.

Der Tag, as it became known, was an event of supreme humiliation for the Germans – "Don't forget that the enemy is a despicable beast," Beatty reminded his men.

The Germans never forgot the snub and refused to send a senior admiral to his funeral in 1936.

Britain on the other hand did honour its last naval hero: he is buried in St Paul's Cathedral, close to Nelson, and is remembered by a bust on the north wall of Trafalgar Square alongside Jellicoe and the greatest naval leader of WW2, Admiral Cunningham.

■ THIS photograph (Q 3642) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@IWM.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



● Clyde's sailors clear up the detritus at Cumberland East Bay (left) washed ashore following the break-up of the Lynn (centre) while AB 'Mini' Cooper and LET 'Redders' Redstone dig out a peat bog

Clyde shows true Gryt

SAILORS from HMS Clyde helped to protect one of the most fragile environments on earth when they cleared flotsam from a wrecked fishing boat in South Georgia.

For nearly a decade, the Lynn has been grounded in Cumberland East Bay, driven on to the rocks by a storm.

Despite being grounded, the wreck remained intact – until a few weeks ago.

After nine years, the heavy swells took their toll and the Lynn broke into three sections in February – spilling many of her contents and prompting an urgent request from the South Georgia authorities for assistance.

What had once been the freezer hold opened up at both ends and exposed insulating foam to the elements.

Waves washed some of it ashore on the nearby beaches at Discovery Point and Dartmouth Point, and more was washed out to sea.

Without taking action, the foam would have broken up into increasingly small pieces – and become a danger to filter-feeding creatures and their predators, which would not be able to digest it.

So on her next routine patrol of the

remote island, Clyde's sailors offered to help out.

Some 20 sailors – roughly half the ship's company – joined scientists from the British Antarctic Survey on a clear-up operation. Together, they collected 15 cubic metres of expanded foam insulation and other man-made debris from the affected beaches.

"The invaluable assistance from members of Clyde's ship's company and their Rigid Raider craft, augmented our own manpower and boat resources such that we were able to collect a large quantity at this critical early point, while the weather was good, and make a huge difference to the pollution problem," said South Georgia Government Officer Pat Lurcock.

Whilst in South Georgia, the sailors invited the scientists and government officers to a 'Clyde's Got Talent' competition, enjoyed a competitive football match at the former whaling station's sports pitch in Grytviken and held a service in Grytviken Church.

"I am very pleased that my ship's company have been able to assist in limiting the environmental impact of manmade debris in an area of outstanding beauty, rich with diverse wildlife and



● Lt Ed Smith tries his hand at sheep shearing

spectacular scenery," said Clyde's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Will Peters.

On their return to their regular Falklands domain, the ship's company were invited to try their hand at camp sports.

If you're conjuring up Carry-on-esque images you're way off the mark.

Camp is the area of the Falkland Islands which isn't Stanley (ie most of it). Sports are basically a mixture of school sports day (sack race) and strenuous physical activities – some rooted in the traditional Falklands rural lifestyle.

Clyde's crew were invited to partake in

the annual event organised by the West Falkland Sports Association.

With the ship safely at anchor at remote Hill Cove on the northwest shore of the smaller and lesser populated of the two main Falkland islands, most of Clyde's sailors were able to go ashore where they had mixed success.

Notable performances were by Logs(SC) Nelicia Thomas, who won both the ladies' mile race and the 100 yards dash, and Lt Chris Pritchard who won five rosettes, including a special award for his sportsmanlike conduct in defeat in the four-man sack race.

Traditional Falklands events included peat cutting and sheep shearing, where skills used historically in daily life in the rugged West Falkland environment are now passed on to the next generation of 144 (ish) islanders in a light-hearted competition.

Such skills are not in much demand aboard a 21st-Century warship, so the Clyde contingent weren't too confident.

Indeed the patrol ship was predictably defeated in the peat cutting despite a whole-hearted effort from AB Den 'Mini' Cooper.

However, in the beginners' sheep shearing class, CPO(ET) Joe Eardley

showed a natural aptitude and walked away with the first prize – much to everyone's surprise (not least his own...).

"I'd never sheared a sheep before in my life – never even been near one," said CPO Eardley, "but there were two officers taking part so I thought I had to uphold the honour of the senior rates' mess. I was over the moon when I won!"

There was success too in the open rodeo bull contest, won – after an impressive ride – LCH Robin Harper.

It didn't take long for the locals to exact their revenge and Clyde's teams were seen off in short order during the 'pull the truck' and darts competitions.

Camp Sports is an important event in the diaries of many Falkland Islanders. It provides an opportunity for communities to get together which, for many people living in remote settlements and islands, is vital for building and maintaining links.

"We had a fabulous few days in Hill Cove and very much enjoyed the generous hospitality and warm welcome shown by the Islanders," said Lt Cdr Peters.

"We made a lot of friends from Hill Cove and other settlements – and we're looking forward to meeting up with them again during future patrols by Clyde around the islands."



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Jubilee jubilation

THE men and women of the Senior Service will be at the heart of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations next month.

In London, men and women from all three Services are taking part in the ceremonial events planned to celebrate 60 years of Queen Elizabeth II's rule.

The spectacle of the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant is at the heart of a weekend of events, with almost 1,000 small ships and vessels forming an escort for the Royal Barge carrying the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.

Two sea boats from HMS Diamond (appropriately) will form part of the marine escort, alongside four ORCs (Offshore Raiding Craft) driven by the Royal Marines of 539 Assault Squadron (539 ASRM).

There will be two of the Navy's P2000 fleet and two Naval Picket Boats from Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth on hand to accompany the procession along the Thames on Sunday June 3.

The flotilla is expected to be one of the largest ever assembled on the river, and will cover a route of some seven miles, starting at Battersea and ending at Tower Bridge.

Each boat taking part will be issued with the Pageant Flag to be flown at all times during the waterborne procession.

One of the music herald barges will carry a Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines.

The RN's premier musicians along with Army and RAF counterparts will be heard along the processional route on Tuesday June 5 when the Queen will attend St Paul's Cathedral for the Service of Thanksgiving.

More than 1,000 personnel from all three Services will be arrayed along the capital's streets for the carriage procession through the heart of the city that Tuesday.

More specific details at www.thediamondjubilee.org.



£14m 'fine' from traffic wardens

IF YOU ever wondered what 180 kilogrammes of pure heroin, neatly parcelled into more than 70 bales, might look like, allow the sailors of HMS Westminster to oblige.

The crew of the Portsmouth-based frigate scored a £14m drugs bust – and dealt a blow to international terrorism when they snared a dhow in the Indian Ocean.

The Portsmouth-based frigate pounced when her Merlin helicopter and combined Royal Marines and Royal Navy boarding teams received orders to search for, intercept and board a suspicious vessel.

They did – and found more than 70 bales of pure heroin, weighing more than 180kg (nearly 400lbs) on the dhow; it's estimated the drugs have a street value of US \$22m – just shy of £14m.

It was the first success for Britain's 'capital ship' since she arrived in the region a couple of months ago to continue the Royal Navy's long-standing fight against criminal activity on the high seas east of Suez.

She's operating under the banner of Combined Task Force 150, one of three task forces co-ordinated by the international Combined Maritime Forces, with the aim of defeating terrorism, preventing piracy, stopping the illegal trafficking of people and drugs, and promoting the maritime environment as a safe place for mariners with legitimate business.

"This has been a successful day for Westminster and for Combined Maritime Forces," said Capt Nick Hine, Westminster's Commanding Officer.

"These smugglers have failed in their quest to make money by bringing misery to those addicted to this harmful substance in the cities around the world."

His ship was directed to seek out the suspicious dhow by the Royal Australian Navy's Cdre Jonathan Mead, in charge of Combined Task Force 150.

He hailed Westminster's success as "a dark day for terrorists" – there is a long-standing link between drug-trafficking and international terrorism.

"We are talking about a street value of approximately \$22 million and I am quite proud of the fact that CTF 150 has now effected the disposal of these substances and further legitimised the lawful and stable maritime environment we are here to champion," he added.

"This, the second disruption in two months, brings our tally of narcotics seized and destroyed to a total of 422 kilograms. The subsequent destruction of these drugs reduces the funding lines of known terror groups by \$49 million."

It's been a productive – and fascinating – few weeks for Westminster, which is now half-way through her east-of-Suez tour of duty.

She's gone from intercepting the very small (the suspicious dhow) to working with the very big – the world's biggest warship, no less.

At 100,000 tonnes (give or take a few...) USS Abraham Lincoln is actually one of 11 of the world's largest warships, flagship of Carrier Strike Group Nine – the most powerful naval force on the Seven Seas.

Westminster joined the battlegroup (one flat-top, one cruiser, two destroyers, one hunter-killer submarine and a support ship, plus an air group of more than 60 jets, helicopters and piston-engined aircraft) in the Arabian Sea.

The Brit was charged with protecting 'Abe', using the combination of her Sonar 2087 – widely regarded as the best submarine-hunting sonar in the world – and Merlin helicopter – widely regarded

as the best submarine-hunting helicopter in the world – to track down, and prosecute, the foe in the form of a Los Angeles-class submarine.

Having proved her anti-submarine warfare credentials – and received praise from the US group's senior commanders – the 'capital ship' was asked to perform the challenging task of plane guard.

That means sailing relatively close in company with a carrier, with sea boats at the ready to launch in case an aircraft landing or taking off is forced to ditch.

Having enjoyed that unique experience, another lay in store for the 'capital ship' in Mombasa.

The Kenyan metropolis is one of Africa's most vibrant cities – and most important ports, gateway to not just native soil, but any east and central African states, with 22 million tonnes of trade passing into and out of the port every year.

As such the sea lanes to and from Mombasa must be kept free.

The past few months have seen RN and Kenyan forces work together in the international fight against the scourge of piracy which blights the western Indian Ocean, with visits to Kenya by senior commanders and Westminster's sister Monmouth working with Kenyan warships.

Westminster maintained those ties by conducting a counter-piracy exercise with Kenyan forces. "The Kenyan Navy are well trained, well prepared and brimming with enthusiasm," said Lt Carl Isherwood, Westminster's boarding officer.

"It was a delight to have had the opportunity to train with them and we have all taken something away from it."

The focal point of the warship's time in Kenya was the visit of the UK's Minister for Africa, Henry Bellingham, who hosted a group of Mombasa's business and trade leaders onboard to discuss the economic development of the port of Mombasa as a gateway for trade to East Africa.

Westminster was also used as the venue for the launch of the 'SeaSafe' initiative. This campaign will see the UK authorities, through the High Commission, partner with the Kenya Tourist Industry and the Government of Kenya to provide useful advice to visitors, helping them enjoy the Indian Ocean safely.

Continuing the theme of forging closer ties with the Kenyans; a number of sporting fixtures were played by Westminster's sides against local opposition.

The debut match by Westminster Warriors rugby team was a hard-fought affair against Mombasa RFC with the locals just edging the victory 15-7. The ship's netball and football teams were also put through their paces against local teams.

Also away from the frigate, several members of the ship's company attended a memorial service for the nine Royal Navy personnel who lost their lives when HMS Brilliant's helicopter crashed near Mombasa in 1989; the Lynx was carrying crew ashore when it came down in the bush about 20 miles outside the city.

Another group visited the Coast General Hospital in Mombasa to chat with patients and distribute small gifts to a variety of delighted patients in the children's, maternity and burns wards.

"The hospital," says Sub Lt Gez Tin, "was extremely well staffed with caring and attentive staff doing a tremendous job."

● Westminster and one of her RIBs stands guard over the drugs dhow

Pictures: ET(WE) Katie Shaw, HMS Westminster

A MUSICAL SPECTACULAR

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Air Day is launched

YEOVILTON Air Day – the main public showcase for naval aviation in 2012 – has been officially launched in Somerset, with this year's event commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Falklands.

The show, on Saturday June 23, typically attracts more than 30,000 visitors, and last year's show won Silver at the South-West Tourism Excellence Awards in the 'Event of the Year' category.

This year's show will be spearheaded by the mighty Avro Vulcan B2, while Navy participants will include Merlins from RNAS Culdrose and the Black Cats Lynx display team.

The world's only airworthy De Havilland Sea Vixen will be joined by a Douglas Skyraider.

The Red Arrows, in a seven-jet formation, will lead the RAF's contribution, joined by ever-popular Battle of Britain Memorial Flight's Lancaster, Spitfire and Hurricane.

The Army Air Corps will supplement its planned involvement in the commando assault with a rare Lynx Mk9 solo display.

Several foreign fliers hope to participate and, while the final programme is still to be confirmed, the Saudi Hawks – the Middle East's equivalent of the Red Arrows – should be making only their second UK appearance.

The day will close with the commando assault, with helicopters flying in armoured vehicles and troops.

A standard ticket costs £23 for adults, senior citizens and current/past UK Armed Forces personnel and £8 for children on the day but there are big discounts in advance.

There are also packages for the grandstand, flight-line enclosure or Swordfish enclosure.

Details of these, and the latest aircraft participation information, can be seen at www.royalnavy.mod.uk/yeovilton-airday

Tickets can also be purchased from Ticketline on 08445 780780.

Good ship Collingwood sails to island's rescue

YOU might have thought HMS Collingwood was a stone frigate – but it didn't stop her sailing to the rescue of Santissima Trinidad.

The island, long riven by internal conflicts, had been hit by hurricane Villeneuve, heaping further misery on the war-weary inhabitants.

Thankfully the Royal Navy was on hand in the shape of Type 23 frigate HMS Collingwood, dispatched to provide humanitarian aid and relief to the island.

Don't try finding it on a map, though, because Santissima Trinidad is a figment of the imagination of planners at Collingwood, which itself never moved an inch from its site in Fareham.

The scenario was for Operation Trafalgar, an exercise for officers and ratings under training at Collingwood.

Personnel were supplied from the simulated Type 23 frigate commanded by Cdr Chris O'Flaherty (Officer Commanding Warfare Support at Collingwood) who reported to Commander UK Task Group played by Cdre Mansergh, the Commanding Officer of the training base.

For exercise purposes a hurricane hit the conflict-prone island, resulting in it requiring Humanitarian Disaster Relief Assistance (HDRA).

In addition to the hurricane, the island's internal conflicts increased the dangers and the risk to the HDRA effort up to the possibility of armed attack.



● Trainees from HMS Collingwood deal with protesters on the imaginary (rainy) island of Santissima Trinidad

Trafalgar was a scenario-driven exercise that incorporated the use of breathing apparatus to rescue people trapped in burning buildings, the restoration of water supplies, power and telephone lines to a local hospital.

Teams also had to calm panicking locals and resupply the area with food and water.

As if that wasn't enough, recce teams had to locate the mayor of the capital city of Santissima Trinidad, Gardoqui, who had become 'socially confused', in an effort to quell civil unrest.

To further push the officers and ratings taking part there were also traffic accidents and religious extremists.

The purpose of the exercise was to bring out the core naval values of command, leadership and management of all personnel involved.

For the Phase 2 Victory Squadron ratings it was the first chance to work with officers directly, but also an opportunity to show their leadership skills and identify themselves for future promotion.

For the officers it was a platform on which to demonstrate their leadership skills and make pressurised on-the-spot decision-making, considering the wider scenario as well as task at hand.

Thankfully Op Trafalgar was a complete success and the island of Santissima Trinidad was restored to much of its former glory.

A notable success was in the traffic accident scenario.

A team of ratings and two officers were sent to the scene of a car crash, and as they approached the incident two individuals came screaming and running towards them in complete panic.

The casualties were immediately



● A resident of Santissima Trinidad, aka HMS Collingwood, is taken for first aid treatment in a humanitarian disaster relief exercise

Pictures: Keith Woodland

dealt with using the first aid skills taught as part of RN basic training.

Thinking that the worst was over the team approached the car, only to find smoke pumping out of the vehicle and, much to the team's dismay, a chemical spill.

They carried out the immediate action drill and donned their respirators, then continued to deal with the incident and rescue survivors.

Exercises such as this show their value in times of real need such as the HDRA in St Lucia over a year ago by HMS Manchester and her

ship's company.

The exercise was brought to an end with a 'Freedom of the City March', celebrating the success of Op Trafalgar, although the weather was more British, with the odd flurry of snow, rather than the blue skies you would expect in sunny Santissima Trinidad.

Cdr O'Flaherty said: "I was thrilled with the output and extremely well done to all concerned."

"It was fun, but more importantly helped trainees for life onboard and real operations."

Sultan tests the mettle of engineering students

HMS SULTAN is also a stone frigate with a bit of imagination, and like her near neighbour HMS Collingwood ensures her students hone their skills with a range of training exercises.

Following a brief one Friday afternoon, a Sultan Operational Sea Training weekend kicked off at 5am on the dot with an assisted shake from staff, and Systems Engineering and Management Course (SEMC) students, the Engineering Technicians Initial Career Course (ETICC) students squared away their accommodation for captain's rounds and gathered for a rousing early-morning run to help blow away the cobwebs.

Mustered outside Brunel Block the students received a motivational brief from WO1 Goodwin and after uttering the war-cry of "et hazar", the students were off for a warm-up before engaging the Air Engineering Technicians in a head-to-head set of team grid sprints.

The result left the AETs in ETICC's wake as the participants headed out to change for breakfast.

Scenario-based stance training was then conducted to give students an insight into the operational training they will receive out in the Fleet.

After another brief in Brunel Quad by WO1 Goodwin the classes split into their Alpha and Bravo streams and headed out to take on the many and varied stances included in the two morning sessions.

The road traffic accident stance held down in Fort Grange was set up as an explosion leading to many casualties, played by the Volunteer Cadet Corps.

The students were sent down to the Fort under the pretext that they were off to play football, but on arriving into the Fort they were presented with distraught victims of the explosion, requiring them to sort out injuries and carry out a search and rescue exercise to account for everyone.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery and Cdre Mark Slawson, Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan, made this the first stance they visited during a tour of the exercise.

Taking time to chat with the staff and cadets, they watched the serial unfold with the students overcoming their initial shock and getting stuck in.

At the Marine Engineering Practical Trainer site, the teams were tasked with supplying water to various services including the Captain's 'Jackson' Boiler and a high pressure salt water pump.

Using system diagrams they had to get the water

to the services under a time constraint, to give them practice in commissioning and operating systems.

At that point the trainees broke for action-messing lunch – 30 minutes to get all 250 trainees to the rear of the Junior Rates Dining Hall, through the action galley and back to the Technical side of Sultan.

At Rowner Fort two teams of students took control of a disaster exercise – a helicopter crash site, where pilots had to be rescued, chemical weapons dealt with and civilians and a 'Sky News team' kept at a safe distance, testing command, leadership and management skills.

Staff then put on SODS opera demo sketches to give students an idea of the standard expected from the sketches they will be putting on, and day one was over.

Another early start – this time in the dark, as the clocks went forward overnight – and the ETICC students found that the PTIs had laid on a sporting challenge, where teams would run a lap head-to-head again, collecting weights, water carriers and a stretcher amongst other tasks before collecting a 'dead Fred' dummy and sprinting for the line.

The AETs edged out the ETICC leaving it all-square after the two events, and after breakfast it was on to the two morning stances.

A simulated flight deck for naval evacuation operations had been set up in the AET's home, Newcomen Hangar, where teams had to organise a processing area to check off evacuees being landed.

Looking after the welfare, medical and security requirements of the arrivals, the students dealt with the evacuees played by a volunteer Phase 3 class.

In the ME's Watt Hangar students were given practical tasks – working on the Perkins diesel engines, they were shown how to operate the engine safely and then given maintenance and repair tasks.

After lunch half the students headed off to the Olympiad whilst the teams performing the SODS Opera had some rehearsal time.

With the scores from the morning PT sessions all square, the results from the Olympiad – a round-robin tournament of bucketball and volleyball – would decide the winner of the SOST Cup.

The Brunel Theatre, was the setting for the grand finale – the banter-laced SODS opera.

The final word came from Cdr Bowser who, after presenting ETICC's WO1 Goodwin with the SOST Cup, took the Safeguard rule out of force.

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'Part of the face of the nation...'

THE Navy and the nation are linked as closely as they have ever been down the centuries because our island nation still depends on maritime power, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope told a conference in Portsmouth.

The Admiral said: "Just as trains are to timetables and Wimbledon is to weather, so the nation and navy have long been forged together because this island nation has always depended on maritime power for its security and, importantly, its prosperity."

The two-day conference – *The Navy is the Nation* – was held in the Princess Royal Gallery in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard.

It was organised by historians Matthew Chorley and Simon Williams with two main aims – to discuss how Britain's illustrious naval history can help to shape the future Royal Navy, and to address the problem of 'sea-blindness' – a lack of understanding about the importance of the sea to the prosperity of the UK.

Admiral Stanhope told delegates at the conference the British nation was fiercely proud of its Royal Navy.

"The Royal Navy is part of the face of the nation – an expression of our maritime nation's character," he stressed.

"Its outward-looking view of the world, its global ambition, and its confidence are, in many ways, defined by the British maritime power invested in the Royal Navy, its platforms and its people," he said.

But the admiral warned that being regarded as a 'sea-blind nation' was a concern because so few people now had a direct connection with the sea.

"There has scarcely been a moment in our nation's maritime history when those working on

and living from the sea have constituted so small a proportion of our population," he said.

Taking questions after his keynote speech, Admiral Stanhope told the President of the Royal Naval Association, Vice Admiral John McAnally, that the UK retained its global strategic reach, but national ambitions must be matched by resources. "We need to balance the books," he said.

In response to a question from Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson, chairman of Seafarers UK, about the future submarine programme, the First Sea Lord said it was vital for both the submarine industry and the Service to keep the skills alive.

"Our next challenge is going to be the delivery of the deterrent replacement, and we need to grow the Service by one crew," he said.

The Admiral said the hiatus in carrier strike would come to an end, as there was a recognition that carriers were needed and they were being built.

The conference was attended by military historians, academics, serving and retired naval officers, students and teachers.

The subjects debated included the Royal Navy's role in British strategy after Afghanistan, and the British economy's dependence on the sea.

Simon Williams said it seemed appropriate to hold the conference in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year, the 30th anniversary of the Falklands, and the 200th anniversary of the war of 1812, especially at a time when naval history was lacking from the education system.

You can read Admiral Stanhope's full speech at www.royalnavy.mod.uk/1slNavyNation

Plymouth ready for Armed Forces Day

PLYMOUTH launched the countdown to this year's Armed Forces Day when the city's Lord Mayor formally accepted the official AFD 2012 flag.

Cllr Peter Brookshaw promised a first-class programme for the national event, which will honour our Armed Forces past and present.

Plymouth will host the national celebrations on Saturday June 30 in a spectacular event on Plymouth Hoe which will provide a unique opportunity to see the Armed Forces up close.

The event, the culmination of a week of events from June 25 to July 1, will feature displays on land, sea and air from current personnel, veterans, cadet forces, the Merchant Navy, support agencies and charities.

The programme will include the opportunity to visit Type 23 frigate HMS Argyle at anchor in the Sound, a moving Drumhead Service on the Hoe, a parade of Armed Forces past and present, an air show including a Typhoon and historical flights, an impressive steam past of British Naval vessels in Plymouth Sound and a display by the Red Arrows.

There will also be a packed programme of music and entertainment, including performances from the Military Wives Choir, a cadet band competition and highlights from the Music of the Night event.

Cllr Peter Brookshaw said: "Plymouth is incredibly honoured to have been chosen to host the 2012 national celebrations.

"The city has an incredibly proud naval heritage, and as home



● Members of the Armed Forces (quite a lot of them Naval Service...), civic leaders and representatives of ex-Service associations gather in Plymouth for the official launch of Armed Forces Day 2012

to the Army and Royal Marines as well, the Armed Forces really are at the heart of the city.

"The event schedule is shaping up to be something really special and will be a tribute to all of those who serve, as well as all the people, agencies and charities who support them."

Speaking on behalf of the Armed Forces, Cdre Jamie Miller,

Naval Regional Commander for Wales and the West of England, said: "We are delighted that Plymouth has been chosen to host the Armed Forces Day national event this year.

"It has been the culmination of a lot of hard work by local people to get together a fantastic programme of events to celebrate the dedication of the nation's

Armed Forces and their families, as well as the many agencies that support them.

"The warmth and hospitality Plymouth has shown the Armed Forces, veterans, cadets and families over the years has been outstanding, so it is most fitting that Plymouth takes a lead role in the Armed Forces Day national celebrations for 2012."

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Going out On a high

***THIS is the way a warship ends.
Not with a whimper but a bang.***

Hopefully T S Eliot won't mind us bastardising his most famous poem...

Barely a year ago the final 12 months in the proud, 30-year career of HMS Liverpool, looked busy, if unremarkable.

It has proved to be anything but. Arguably no Royal Navy vessel has enjoyed a higher profile in the past year than the venerable destroyer.

Of the final 12 months of her life, ten were at sea.

Her final four weeks of active service saw her bid farewell to the city of her birth – and with which she shares a name; a final military duty, taking part in NATO exercises between Harstad and Bergen; a final run ashore (Bergen) and a final royal visit, well two royal visits – the King of Norway and Prince Charles (simultaneously).

That's all after sailing at short notice to monitor the activities of Russia's flagship, Admiral Kuznetsov, in the Atlantic.

And seven months off Libya, of course.

Those seven months saw the destroyer spew more than 200 rounds from her main gun – and become the first Royal Navy warship since the Falklands to come under enemy fire.

Having learned of those deeds first-hand from the men and women who were there during his hour-long visit in the Norwegian port of Bergen, the Prince of Wales conceded he realised how "hairy" things had been off Libya.

He told the assembled members of the ship's company: "It's taken me some time to discover what you were up to out there – and how you were being fired at. It seems a great deal more hairy than we imagined."

Bergen was very wet – the gathering for the Prince and the King of Norway took place in the hangar, although the Guard of Honour braved the rain on the flight deck and one 'lucky' sailor was 'official umbrella holder'.

What a contrast with the final entry into Portsmouth five days later, played out under crystal-clear blue spring skies and unusually warm temperatures for late March.

And thus ended a 921,700-nautical-mile odyssey which began on the Mersey three decades earlier.

Built by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead, the ship was launched in 1980. After an accelerated trials period she sailed for the South Atlantic in June 1982. Though she did not see active service in the Falklands conflict she remained on station for the next six months.

She did, however, serve as escort for HMS Ark Royal during the carrier's participation in the 2003 campaign in Iraq and truly made her mark supporting the people of Libya in their efforts to shake off the shackles of Gaddafi rule.

Says Liverpool's final logistics officer, Lt Cdr Steve Gott: "The last year has been full-on – as the Deputy Fleet Commander, Vice Admiral Jones, said to us: 'You don't

know when to peak.'

"We've been at sea for ten of the past 12 months. Liverpool's done a job right to the end – and we've not gone out with a whimper, but quite a big bang."

Actually, she went out to the melancholy strains of *Sunset* drifting across a serene Portsmouth Harbour, the White Ensign was lowered for the last time. And the Union Jack. So too the Fleet Efficiency Award as Britain's best destroyer.

And thus did HMS Liverpool become simply Liverpool.

Four days after her final entry into Portsmouth, her days as a warship ended as she was formally decommissioned in the shadow of Semaphore Tower.

Some 200 relatives of crew, plus friends, former members of the ship's company, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool Cllr Frank Prendergast, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery and a sizeable number of the 19 officers who have commanded the ship since 1981 gathered at South Railway Jetty to show their support.

They were treated to music from the Band of HM Royal Marines School of Music, impromptu flypasts from Coastguard, RAF Search and Rescue and Fleet Air Arm helicopters, and even a blast from the fire hose of a tug which was working with the Gosport ferry in the harbour.

The ship's chaplain, the Rev Charles Bruzon, led guests and 240-strong ship's company through the last formal act of the destroyer's career.

Despite being in service for three decades, it was in the final year of her life that Liverpool truly made her mark; her seven-month mission in support of the free peoples of Libya last year earned her international acclaim – and played no small part in the downfall of Colonel Gaddafi.

"What this last ship's company achieved off Libya will endure and live on," Rev Bruzon assured those gathered on the jetty.

He said Liverpool's paying off was "almost the end of a human life. But all of us will treasure the memories of good times, camaraderie and accomplishments."

"Hold your heads high and be filled with pride."

It fell to 39-year-old AB Anthony Clarke to lower the Navy's famous standard for the final time, fold it, then present it to his Commanding Officer Cdr Colin Williams.

Liverpool is the junior rating's last ship so "to haul down the Ensign was a great honour, but also hugely poignant".

Such feelings were echoed by Cdr Williams, who conceded that his "lower lip was trembling" as his flag was lowered.

"This is a sad day – not something you would want to happen, but every ship has a life span and HMS Liverpool has served her country and ship's companies well to the end, and all should be rightly proud to have served in her."

"In the 18 months since I assumed command, HMS Liverpool and her ship's company have achieved some of the highest accolades a Royal Navy warship

could hope for."

He continued: "Liverpool is the last of the 'classic' 42s and is ready in all respects to hand the baton of air defence on to the new, more capable Type 45 destroyers."

"The camaraderie and *esprit de corps* that has been generated will live on and be the enduring legacy."

"HMS Liverpool remains the embodiment of all that a destroyer can be and has upheld the finest traditions, standards and fighting prowess of the Royal Navy."

Liverpool's life truly ends on May 28 when the last members of the ship's company – which by Easter had been whittled down from the usual 240 to 140 – hand over the keys to the ship to the MOD's disposal teams.

By then, however, much of the heart will have been taken out of the ship.

The remaining ship's company move ashore on May 9, the computer systems are shut down a week later. Anything which can be re-used by the Fleet will be stripped out; what cannot will either be tossed in skips, or left aboard for scrapping.

The trophies return to the Trophy Store for future HMS Liverpool – or whichever future ship picks up her affiliates.

Treasured items such as name plates and boards, the ship's bell, the huge liver bird badge on the funnel which gave the destroyer her Crazy Red Chicken nickname are passed to a memorabilia store; a committee will decide which suitable people or organisations receive the mementoes.

Whilst this is (probably) the last you'll read of this HMS Liverpool in these pages, it is not quite the end of the Liverpool story.

If you're a soap fan keep a close eye on the Rovers Return over the next few weeks – you might see the ship's badge on the wall of the famous fictional pub.

Some 17 members of the ship's company were given a private tour of the *Coronation Street* set when the destroyer paid her farewell visit to Liverpool back in February.

The sailors were royally hosted by cast regulars such as Michelle Keegan and Antony Cotton, who showed them behind the scenes of Britain's best-loved soap, including Roy's cafe and the Rovers.

The visitors left the Corrie stars with some gizzits as a thank-you, including a calendar and a replica ship's badge.

The soap team promised to put up the badge on Rovers' wall – and were filming episodes for May when the sailors visited, so keep a sharp lookout this month.

TV is, of course, transient. If you're looking for a more permanent legacy left by D92, try the towns and cities of now-free Libya.

Or maybe the mess decks of HMS Defender.

One third of the ship's company, some 80 souls, join the fifth of the Type 45s built to succeed Liverpool and her sisters.

"It means there's a core of battle-hardened sailors on her," says Lt Cdr Gott. "The Liverpool legacy lives on."

Pictures: PO(Phot) Paul Punter, Maxine Davies and Abbie Herron, FRPU East



30 years on, Veterans are still fighting for peace

On the 14th of June this year it will have been 30 years since the Falklands War ended. But for many Falklands Veterans, the battle still rages in their minds.

Combat Stress is the leading UK charity specialising in the care of Veterans' mental ill health. We are supporting over 200 Veterans who served in the Falklands War and who, 30 years on, are still suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, paranoia or depression from what they endured in battle.

We know there are hundreds more out there who need our help.



Darren's story

Darren Horsnell joined the 4th Field Regt, Royal Artillery at sixteen and was nineteen in 1982 when they were deployed to the Falklands. Here he bravely shares some of his experiences to explain why treatment is so vital.

'I saw the Argentinean jets coming down bomb alley and opening fire on our ships, dropping their bombs. A feeling of uselessness came over me. Our men were sitting targets. We were firing small arms at the airplanes and I remember screaming at them, "Leave them alone!" I still wake up screaming.

Later I was injured and evacuated to the field hospital. While they were operating on my right calf, I could see the body of a guy in the next bed who had had his back blown out. I used to dream about this guy and in the dream he'd turn around and start talking.

When I came home I didn't tell anybody that I was having nightmares, or flashbacks. But all that was sinking deeper and deeper into me, and obviously it was getting harder to hide. But I was in denial. It was everyone around me who had the problem, not me.

It was nearly 14 years before I got any help. My [then] wife forced me to go and see my GP, who told me about Combat Stress. They assessed me and diagnosed me with PTSD.

One day, the Activities Centre Manager said to me, "Why don't you try some art therapy?" When I was painting it took all the bad memories away. I am now teaching other Veterans to paint. It is a great form of therapy.

I also do Cognitive Behavioural Therapy at Combat Stress, once a month. And I am on a health management course too. I can honestly say Combat Stress saved my life. Without them I don't think I would be here today.

There's nothing wrong about going to ask for help. Go and see somebody.'

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HMS Smiter celebrates anniversary

GLASGOW’S University RN Unit celebrated its 40th anniversary when Scotland’s senior naval officer, Rear Admiral Chris Hockley, boarded affiliated patrol boat HMS Smiter for a trip ‘doon the watter’.

Members past and present came together for a weekend of celebrations honouring Glasgow and Strathclyde’s URNU.

Dubbed ‘the universities’ best-kept secret’, it gives Glasgow students the opportunity to learn practical maritime and life skills, all within a social environment.

Rear Admiral Hockley, Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland, was joined on Smiter by Professors Olivia Robinson and Denis Fischbacher-Smith of the Glasgow Military Education Committee, plus two former COs of Smiter.

The weekend culminated in a gala dinner for 150 members, alumni and civic guests on the tall ship Glen Lee, with a fireworks finale then a *ceilidh*.

Lt Cdr Peter Vincent, CO of both GURNU and HMS Smiter, said: “It was wonderful to see the level of interaction between alumni and students, and hear about their personal experiences within the unit.

“I’m glad to know that GURNU was as successful then as it is now, and I can only wonder what the 50th anniversary will bring!”

HMS Smiter went on to deploy to the west coast of Scotland over the Easter holiday, embarking 35 students over a 20-day period.

■ Highland Archer – pages 26-7

Dockyards, Daleks and Dickens

WITH Easter behind us the tourist season is starting to get into full swing, and museums around the country are unveiling new exhibitions and attractions to grab their share of the market.

The Historic Dockyard Chatham has organised a major event around the 50th anniversary of the launch of submarine HMS Ocelot, the last warship built at the Kent dockyard.

One of the highlights of the day – Saturday May 12 – will be the *Beat Retreat and Ceremonial Sunset* performed by the Royal Marines Band CTCRM.

For tickets and details see www.thedockyard.co.uk/ocelot50

May 12 also sees the opening of *Steam, Steel and Submarines: The Royal Dockyard Story 1832-1984* in a new gallery within the Fitted Rigging House.

And for thrill-seekers Chatham Historic Dockyard also offers a ghost walk special – *Reading the Riot Act: Troublesome Ropemakers* – on May 18 at 9pm, and a museum sleeperover the following night at 7.30pm, both in support of the national Museums at Night initiative.

And on the subject of scary, Daleks will be invading Navy museums in England over the next few months, starting with the Royal Marines Museum in Portsmouth on Sunday May 6.

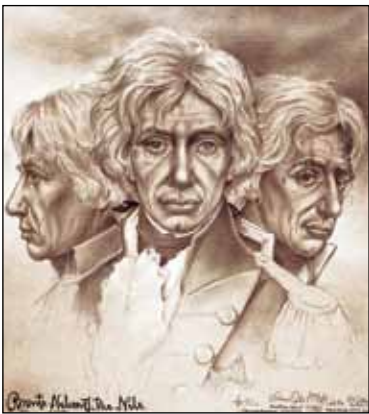
The Daleks, built by *Doctor Who* enthusiasts, will also return to the site of a former invasion, the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton, on August 18-19.

The great-great grandson of Charles Dickens will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the author’s birth with a new show which will be premiered at Chatham Historic Dockyard on May 16.

The Complete Works of Charles Dickens will feature extracts from all his major novels, and will be staged in the Royal Dockyard Church at 2.30pm.

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard hosts “the UK’s largest free vintage and music event to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee” – Victorious Vintage takes place on June 2-3 from 10am to 10pm.

And London landmark HMS Belfast re-opens to the public on May 18, and hosts a weekend of family activities on May 26-27.



Nelson portrait on show

THE new Nelson Portrait, created by artists Adrian Purkis and Alan Suttie – the first in triptych form – was due to go on public view for the first time as *Navy News* went to press.

Considered a very accurate likeness, the portrait depicts Nelson circa 1800, when he was world weary, visibly scarred and slowly recovering from his many painful battle wounds.

He had recently been created Duke of Bronte by a grateful King of Naples, hence the signature

‘Bronte Nelson on the Nile’.

Created in close collaboration with, amongst others, the late Dr Colin White, renowned world Nelson expert, the portrait carries Colin’s signature and that of Anna Tribe, great-great-granddaughter of Nelson.

Backed by the National Maritime Museum Greenwich the triptych has also received the personal endorsement of the Duke of Edinburgh.

The main purpose of the first public display of the portrait,

in St Paul’s Cathedral Crypt, next to Nelson’s tomb, from April 30, is to raise the profile of HMS Victory and that of the Save the Victory Fund charity, administered for over 90 years by the Society for Nautical Research – see www.snr.org.uk

Limited edition signed prints are available, with approximately 75 per cent of sale profits benefiting the Save the Victory Fund charity. See www.nelsonportrait.co.uk or phone Alan Suttie 0208 640 7626.

Falklands sacrifices honoured

A SERIES of national events marking the 30th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict began with a short service of remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, 30 years to the day after the islands were invaded.

Some 18,000 Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary sailors and Royal Marines took part in the 11-week campaign to re-take the islands, which saw a force of more than 100 warships, support vessels and merchantmen dispatched to the South Atlantic at short notice.

Six vessels never returned – four Royal Navy warships, one RFA landing ship, and the supply ship Atlantic Conveyor – and the 130 sailors and commandos killed accounted for more than half the 255 British dead; in addition, 257 men from the Naval Service were wounded.

A Falklands flame was lit in the arboretum’s chapel for the first of the 74 days of the conflict.

Up until Thursday June 14 – the anniversary of the Argentine surrender – visitors can use this to light their own candle of remembrance.

No British warship which took part in the campaign is still serving, but the public can see a sister ship of the Type 42 destroyers which shielded the Falklands task force, HMS York, during three days of commemorations in Portsmouth.

The Remember the Falklands Weekend opens with a private garden party and Beat Retreat at HMS Nelson on the evening of Friday May 4 for the estimated 400 veterans still serving in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

That’s followed by events in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard on Saturday May 5 and Sunday May 6 – with York and her successor, new Type 45 destroyer HMS Dragon, open to the public.

On Sunday May 6, there will be a service of remembrance in Portsmouth’s Anglican Cathedral attended by serving RN personnel and Falklands’ veterans, and will include a performance by the Royal Marines Band.

Following the service there will be a procession to the Falklands Memorial in nearby Broad Street.

Commemorations then return to Staffordshire for the dedication of the Falklands Memorial at the National Arboretum on May 20.

The monument – a curved wall of rugged stone facing a rock from the Falklands and two benches – has been erected thanks to a £62,000 fundraising drive by SAMA82 which represents Falkland conflict veterans.

Falkland Islanders hold their annual liberation day ceremony on June 14, while there’s a service of remembrance at St Paul’s Cathedral in London organised by the Falklands Families Association on June 16.

The last major commemorative event takes place the following day, June 17, with the annual service at the Falklands Memorial Chapel in Pangbourne, near Reading.

■ Falklands timeline – pages 32-33

Naples gun squad set sights on glory

ONE of the highlights of the HMS Collingwood Open Day (see below) is undoubtedly the action-packed contest for field gun honours.

Now renamed the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity Field Gun Competition, the competition pits squads from the Royal Navy and beyond against each other – and equally pits contestants against themselves.

For the competition is as much a personal challenge as a team sport, which is why there is no shortage of competitors despite the gruelling nature of the runs.

The spirit of that challenge is captured (right) by American Serviceman Scott Wulwick (sandwphotos.com), the official photographer of the Joint Force Command Naples team.

JFC Naples proudly advertises itself as the only multinational, NATO field gun crew competing to win the competition.

Their bid for glory has been supported by their colleagues at the NATO HQ, with the team scheduled to march their gun into the base, flanked by Harley Davidson bikes, at the end of last month, with the Commander JFC, Admiral Bruce W Clingan,



presenting their shirts and taking the salute.

With such a small squad, training in Naples has had to be efficient and effective, and driving force Maj Bruce Foster RM, Staff Officer Amphibious and Expeditionary Warfare at Allied Maritime Command, ensured that the Commando Training Centre’s ‘teach, coach, mentor’ philosophy was prominent.

That regime included Pilates with Tracey Scott Mason in order to minimise injuries and build core strength.

The progress of the team can be followed on Facebook under **JFC Naples Field Gun Team**.

But it is not just about Naples – Gibraltar is once again competing, as are – *inter alia* – Portsmouth, Devonport and Clyde Naval Bases, the stone frigates of Collingwood,

Sultan, Raleigh, Seahawk, Heron, Excellent and BRNC, Northwood HQ, MOD Abbey Wood and assault ship HMS Bulwark, as well as the Maritime Reserves.

Beyond the Naval Service the threat comes from Defence Medical Services Training Group (MSTG) Aldershot, the Military Corrective Training Centre Colchester, 7 Bn REME and RAF Cosford.

Plenty for visitors at open day

MANY people flock to the HMS Collingwood Open Day for the thrills and spills of the field gun competition (see above).

But that is not the half of it as the Fareham training establishment, home of the Maritime Warfare School, throws open its gates to the public on Saturday May 26.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) Field Gun Competition will feature 24 crews from across the UK and Europe competing for the coveted Brickwoods Trophy – a fast and furious tournament that requires 18-man teams to run, dismantle, reassemble and fire the gun in the shortest possible time, traditionally in heats of six crews at a time.

Strength, stamina, and teamwork are essential in this challenge, and the crews began the physical training in March.

Specialist training with the guns began last month.

But wander away from the field gun cockpit and there are plenty of other attractions to entertain and capture the imagination for visitors of all ages.

This should – weather and contingencies permitting – include displays from the Royal Navy Raiders parachute display team, the Royal Marines Band Collingwood and HMS Collingwood Volunteer Band, plus an extensive recruitment zone with helicopters and more.

Arena 2 will feature, amongst others, the Kilts of Caledonia Pipe Band, a dog show, a Gosport Budokan display, cheerleader and street dancers.

There will be a Ship Open to Visitors area where people will get a close look at some of the training equipment used by today’s Navy.

And they may even get the chance to experience Royal Navy training first-hand in the impressive bridge simulator which will

allow you to take a ship into or out of harbour in a remarkably realistic fashion.

For those brave enough there is also the high ropes challenge.

There will be an extensive ‘Kidz Area’ with a free funfair, and a bouncy castle and children’s entertainers.

A vast selection of commercial and charity stands have booked their pitches, with all the activity helping to swell the coffers of naval and local charities.

As an exclusive offer for visitors there will be free buses running to and from the event from Fareham railway station and the Gosport Ferry stopping at various places en route.

Gates open at 9.30am, and discounted tickets are available from Gosport and Fareham *News* offices and Tourist Information or on the gate.

For further information see www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Collingwood-Openday

From sea rescue to mountain evacuation

ROYAL Navy and RAF Search And Rescue helicopters plucked seven people from a cargo vessel which ran aground in North Wales.

The merchantmen Carrier, with seven Polish crew, several tonnes of stones and 40,000 litres of fuel aboard, was driven aground in a Force 9 gale near Raynes Jetty at Llandudulas near Colwyn Bay.

A Sea King from HMS Gannet in Prestwick, already in the air after a previous call-out, was first on scene shortly before 10pm and winched off five of the seven crew before sustaining damage to the aircraft’s winch when the wire caught on a ship’s light, leaving two crew and the RN winchman PO Mike ‘H’ Henson on board.

They were stuck on the Carrier for nearly two hours until an aircraft arrived from RAF Leconfield, north of Hull, and successfully rescued the remaining ship’s crew and the senior rating – completing

the mission just before 1am.

Both aircrews had to deal with foul weather conditions; the RAF helicopter – with exchange Royal Navy co-pilot Lt James Bullock on board, who flew the Sea King during the rescue – had to use the M62 across the Pennines to navigate at low level through snow.

The Navy helicopter diverted to RAF Valley to repair the winch. “Conditions were extremely challenging,” said HMS Gannet’s duty observer, Lt Angela Lewis.

“Sea spray from the waves was being whipped up to a height of about 60ft in places and we were in the hover at about 80ft, so it was quite nerve-racking.

“We put PO Henson down on the deck of the vessel and he then quickly packaged the first four members of the crew in separate winches.

“We dropped them off on the A55 to a waiting ambulance and



● HMS Gannet’s Sea King on Ben MacDui

Picture: PO Mike Henson

returned for the remaining three crew and winchman. Unfortunately we were only able to complete one lift on this second run before the winch was damaged.”

This was PO Henson’s first shift as a qualified search and rescue aircrewman, having transferred from Merlins – though he was already something of an old hand, having made international

headlines last summer when he saved all 13 crew of a stricken tanker in the Arabian Sea while serving with HMS St Albans.

The Welsh incident came just hours after the same crew helped rescue nine walkers on Britain’s second-highest peak.

The Sea King broke away from training along the Clyde to fly to Ben MacDui in the Cairngorms,

where a party of three adults and six teenagers were caught in heavy snow and freezing conditions.

All nine were found safe at approximately 1,200m up the mountain and were lifted down to Braemar Mountain Rescue base.

“Wind speeds on Ben MacDui when we arrived on scene were probably in the region of 50 knots and wind chill around -35°C, so it was quite unpleasant; very, very cold,” said Lt Lewis.

“Although it was a relatively low cloud base, we were able to find the group immediately and the rescue was straightforward and rapid, even with the pretty awful conditions.

“We landed relatively close to the group, though distant enough not to stir up too much snow with the rotors near them, and PO Henson went over to the group to make sure that they were all okay.”

HERE'S something you don't see much of in an English springtime.

No, not crystal-clear blue skies but university students at the controls of a Grob trainer.

Somewhere high above the Somerset countryside, a couple of undergraduates get a taste of the fundamentals of flight courtesy of 727 Naval Air Squadron.

Fourteen members of University Royal Naval Units from across the UK left their usual P2000 patrol boats behind for the unique chance to fly in the agile little trainers during the annual flying camp.

While their fellow students were sailing around this sceptred isle on the URNU boats' Easter deployment (see *the centre pages*), specially-selected cadets rocked up at RNAS Yeovilton for a fortnight's glimpse into life in the Fleet Air Arm.

The students experienced up to eight hours of instructed flying, as well as visits to Yeovilton's front-line helicopter squadrons, where they were

able to talk with pilots, observers and engineers.

Students were taught the basics of flight in a classroom, then given the chance to put it into

practice – the most exciting of lessons being the aerobatics sortie in which students learned how to loop, barrel roll and stall turn; luckily sick bags were issued before every flight.

"I can say that this was one of the most meteoric experiences of my life to date," enthused OC Natalie Soulsby, who represented Manchester and Salford URNU.

A short air navigation exercise through the local airspace involving formation flying and tail chases with up to three tutor aircraft in close proximity proved to be the highlight of the course.

"Formation flying was the best thing I have ever done. I couldn't stop smiling," said OC Anna Beare, from Cambridge.

OC Soulsby said the chance to fly with other

Grobs was "the acme of the flying syllabus."

She added: "Another highlight was the opportune amount of *Top Gun* re-enactments, which will provide me with ample photographs to take back to HMS Biter."

As well as flying, the cadets sampled wardroom life, enjoyed the Fleet Air Arm Museum and didn't enjoy circuit training in the gym where the base's physical training instructors pushed them to near exhaustion.

The students didn't particularly enjoy the early rises (shock, horror), while five tried the Dunker – Yeovilton's helicopter crash-at-sea escape trainer – described by OC Soulsby as "controlled drowning in the dark in a mock helicopter – terrifying but absolutely amazing."

The two weeks at Yeovilton also afforded the URNU cadets the chance to visit the station's air traffic control, 815 (Lynx), 846 and 848 (Junglie Sea King) squadrons, as well as the Naval Flying

Standards Flight (Fixed Wing) operating the Hawk T1 jets.

At the end of the course the students were individually debriefed by their flying instructors and given invaluable advice for the future.

727 is typically used by the Fleet Air Arm for 'flight grading' – assessing the ability of potential pilots to take on board all they would be taught as front-line helicopter and fast-jet pilots.

"We run these courses several times a year for potential officer candidates," explained Lt Daley Simpson of 727 NAS.

"It gives aspiring pilots an insight into military flying training, developing their awareness and naval aviation knowledge."

And evidently it did just that. Said OC Soulsby: "It has had a profound impact upon my – and numerous other members of our group's – career ambitions, courtesy of the unique insight we were provided throughout the course."

"This is something I would most definitely like to be a part of in the future."



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● Lt Cdr Ian Berry

Ian finally picks up his MBE

A COUNTY Durham reservist has finally been presented with his MBE for service with Royal Navy and US Navy forces in the Gulf.

Lt Cdr Ian Berry, of HMS Calliope in Gateshead, has been a reservist for nearly 30 years.

Career highlights include time spent in command of minesweepers and fast patrol boats, being a full-time trainer for reservists and a Principal Warfare Officer on a Type 42 destroyer.

The MBE has been awarded however, in recognition of his sterling service with Royal Navy and US Navy forces in the Gulf.

Although awarded the MBE in 2011, Lt Cdr Berry had been unable to collect it due to operational requirements in the field including the Libyan crisis, where he was deployed with NATO on board an Italian warship, and a period conducting anti-piracy duties off the coast of Somalia.



● WO Tony Matthews

30 years up for Tony

A SENIOR rate from HMS President has celebrated 30 years unbroken service in the RNR.

WO Tony Matthews was presented with a clasp to his Volunteer Reserves Service Medal in a ceremony in London, followed by a dinner with colleagues.

Tony, in civilian life a sales executive with UPS, joined the RNR in 1982 at HMS Wildfire, then the RNR unit in Chatham.

He had the privilege of carrying the colour during Wildfire's closure ceremony in 1994, after which he and his colleagues transferred to President in London.

Wildfire itself was subsequently reborn as the unit covering north London.

The RNR is, however, still alive and well in Chatham where HMS President maintains its Medway Division satellite unit, to which Tony recently transferred to provide valuable support to the unit's Officer in Charge, Lt Catherine Fearon.

"Tony is such a great character, and brings a wealth of experience with him that we all benefit from hugely," said Catherine.

Tony was the first WO in the RNR, and later the first appointed Command Warrant Officer, a role in which he acted in support of two Commanders of the Maritime Reserves from 2007 to 2011.

His career has taken Tony on exercises and operations to the USA, Poland, Bermuda, Gibraltar, France, the Azores and West Indies.

He also travels widely as a DJ, and can be heard online with his own jazz, funk and soul programme on Stomp Radio.

Twilight raid hones commandos' skills

COMMANDOS from the Royal Marines Reserve unit in Tyneside have taken part in an aggressive exercise raid that ended with the capture of a notorious 'criminal'.

Exercise Northern Wader was an amphibious raiding exercise conducted by the reservist bootnecks, all of whom have other jobs in civilian life in and around the North East.

Having completed mandatory capsizing drills in the chilly, murky waters of the River Tyne near to their Newcastle headquarters, the marines headed up the Northumberland coast towards Holy Island, where they conducted open-water drills, before receiving intelligence reports and orders for the night-time mission.

This mission was to nab Objective Thunder, an elusive arms trafficker who, intelligence reports confirmed, was in the area.

Using their stealthy inflatable raiding craft the commandos silently came ashore just after midnight on Sunday morning, secured a temporary base and linked up with a local agent who gave them accurate intelligence.

Slipping carefully through the foggy night using their advanced surveillance devices a final



● Members of Tyne RMR with their raiding craft

reconnaissance confirmed the location of Objective Thunder and orders for an attack were given.

Objective Thunder's protection gang reacted aggressively to the opening fire-fight, and it became clear that they had no intention of surrendering their leader.

The Royals pressed on with their mission, pouring sustained and accurate fire onto the enemy, who quickly succumbed.

Objective Thunder was

confirmed dead, and after a quick head-count and equipment check the commandos slipped back into the murky darkness.

Lt Col Jon Sear, the Commanding Officer of RMR Tyne, said: "This kind of exercise is commonplace among the Royal Marines Reserve and allows my men to enhance their operational capability for all kinds of contingencies.

"Reservist Marines are required

to integrate fully with their Regular counterparts and indeed are often deployed to the frontline with them.

"Therefore exercises like this are vital to maintain and develop skills required by all Marines in whichever scenario they are faced with.

"Full credit must go to the team who carried out their duties professionally in cold, nasty conditions."

At the top of their games

TWO reservists who took up their sports through the Royal Navy have gone on to represent their Service in competition.

Standing just 151.5 centimetres (and the .5 is important) in his cotton socks, AB Paul Mannion, from Blaenau in Chester, only just made the minimum height to join the Royal Naval Reserve back in 2007.

However, five years on, Lofty – well, what else? – is an enthusiastic and valued member of the ship's company at HMS Eaglet, the RNR unit based in Liverpool.

And now Lofty has scaled new heights by qualifying for the Navy boxing team.

During the qualifying rounds at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth, he was apparently described as boxing like "Mike Tyson in his prime" – though he assured, the former Bebington High School pupil will be fighting at a more appropriate lightweight class than the once-feared heavyweight champion.

Lofty, 26, who is a student nurse at the Countess of Chester Hospital, said: "I am over the moon to have been selected. I had never boxed before but it has long been my ambition.



● AB Helen Barnsley-Parson

"I love the discipline, fitness and adrenaline rush that comes from being in the ring.

"I doubt I would ever have actually got round to boxing had it not been for my connection with the Navy."

Meanwhile, for another reservist able rate, her climb to the top started with normal lunchtime training sessions down at the gym, and finished with her becoming a top female powerlifter in the Royal Navy.

Helen Barnsley-Parson, 21, has been with HMS King Alfred in Portsmouth since 2007.

Helen works evenings in a local pub, and being a keen athlete, she regularly trains at lunchtime in the gym at HMS Collingwood.

Her routine consists of normal fitness training and circuits, so weightlifting was not something she would normally consider.

Helen said: "I have lifted weights before, but not with competition technique."

Last year's RN Powerlifting single-lift championships were being held one afternoon at Collingwood, and Helen decided to stay on and watch the proceedings.

To her surprise she found herself roped in as a last-minute entrant into the competition, and later admitted: "I was a complete beginner to the concept of powerlifting."

As an under-23 Helen also qualified for the junior competition, which required three lifts – squat, bench press, and dead lift.

Helen did so well that despite being a novice at the sport she set new records for opening weights in all three categories, achieving a total lift score of 220kg, itself a new junior and open record – an amazing achievement considering her age, weight category and experience.

In the final result she won Best Female Lifter (overall) and Best Bench Press, in her weight category of 70kg.

Her records were so good that they now



● AB Paul 'Lofty' Mannion with two Royal Marines colleagues in Liverpool

stand for both the junior and open categories.

Helen is going on to train with the RN Powerlifting Association, and hopes to compete in the inter-Services and regional competitions.

She hopes to qualify for the British nationals, and is talking to the British Powerlifting Association about training with the national squad.

When asked what the competition meant to her, Helen said: "It's great that I've been given the opportunity, through being in the Reserves, to compete in an event that I would previously have never considered, and it actually turns out I'm not bad!"

She added: "I am very proud of my achievement."

Flying the flag

A SURVIVOR of the Mumbai terrorist attacks will be a flag bearer for the Team Welcome and Victory Ceremonies at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Reservist AB Harnish Patel (*third from left in the picture*), from HMS King Alfred in Portsmouth, will be one of 176 members of the Services who will raise the flags at the 805 Olympic and Paralympic medal ceremonies this summer.

Candidates were chosen by the MOD for their sporting or operational achievements, or their involvement in their community.

Teams will consist of six flag bearers and one flag manager. There will be eight apiece from the RN and RAF, nine from the

Army and one overall commander.

Victory ceremonies take place after a medal event finishes: after the awarding of medals the flags of the athletes' countries are raised while the national anthem of the winner – recorded by the London Philharmonic Orchestra in advance of the Games – is played.

Harnish said: "Not certain if I would be able to walk or run again whilst in hospital in Mumbai, following being stitched back together, I had two options – pick myself up or roll over.

"The latter had not been an option.

"It is a great honour to be selected for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."



● Lt Cdr Julie Macdonald and PO Balbir Kaur on board HMS Illustrious

Nursing pair on carrier

TWO Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service (QARNNS) reservists sailed with HMS Illustrious for the carrier's deployment to the Arctic Circle.

Lt Cdr Julie Macdonald and PO Balbir Kaur provided the expertise to enhance the medical facilities on board so Illustrious can act as a Role 2 medical facility if required.

This means that in the future the helicopter carrier can provide advanced resuscitation, an operating theatre and two intensive care beds to save lives close to the action.

Lt Cdr Macdonald, an accident and emergency Sister at Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth, said: "I have been really impressed with the friendliness and accommodation of the ship's company in accepting us at short notice in this unique and exciting experience for RNR nurses."

PO Kaur, a Senior Staff Nurse (trauma and orthopaedics) at Solihull and Heartlands Foundation Trust Hospital, has seen RNR service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The senior rate said: "I feel privileged to have had such a great opportunity and to have been given the chance to serve and experience the day-to-day life on HMS Illustrious."

Of the short-notice deployment, PO Kaur said: "The chance to sail with Illustrious doesn't come often.

"Part of the benefit of the RNR is not knowing what's coming next and taking back the skills we learn to our day jobs."

Surg Cdr Mark Henry, Principal Medical Officer of HMS Illustrious, said: "Lt Cdr Macdonald and PO Kaur have been a tremendous asset to the ship during their brief time on board.

"Their hard work and expertise have moved our Role 2 medical capability forward quite significantly."

Recruits tour ship

NEW recruits to Northwood's RNR unit were given a guided tour of HMS Liverpool when the veteran destroyer visited London on her farewell tour.

The ten members of HMS Wildfire's initial training class, who had only joined the RNR four weeks previously, were one of the few groups invited to meet the ship's company and look around the warship in Docklands.

Training Officer Lt Edward Dunn said: "We were extremely lucky to be able to get our new trainees onto a real warship so early in their Naval careers."

He added: "Giving them the opportunity to speak to fellow sailors about the variety of deployments they've been on and the things they have seen and done created a real buzz.

"It's really motivated everyone to progress through their basic training as quickly as they can so they can start contributing to the great things the Royal Navy does around the world."

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DATE**
1
JUNE

A helpful hand

(Benevolence: kind and helpful, to wish well)

THE RNRMC was established to do three things; to bring a focus to naval charity, so that we could raise more money for all of our beneficiaries, so that we could give more away, specifically to benevolent causes.

But what is Benevolence? Well, the dictionary says it well – it is our way of being kind and helpful to our community.

And there are a lot of us! Latest estimates are that around 1.2 million people are alive today who have either been in the Naval Service or who are the dependants of those who have.

Compare that to the roughly 34,000 in uniform and you will see why we have to target our grants on what we call the “through life” needs.

That's why last year around £3 million of the £5 million we gave out went to helping those in need.

In 2009 just four charities received grants from us. In March this year we supported 18 charities – and you can read more about them on this page.

For all your fundraising enquiries, please contact our team on fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk.

When you help us you are helping a huge Naval family, and who knows, one day it might be you or your loved ones that need that help.

I hope not, but you never know!

I wish you and your families well.

Robert Robson
Chief Executive,
The Royal Navy
and Royal Marines Charity
robert.robson@rnrmc.org.uk

**RAISE FUNDS...
AND
THE CUP!**

**RAISE FUNDS
FOR RNRMC AND
YOU COULD WIN
UP TO £4000 FOR
YOUR UNIT AND
GET TO LIFT THE
CUP!**



Our commitment

THE RNRMC is committed to supporting both our serving personnel, our veterans and their families.

It is clear to see that by far the largest beneficiary group we have are those who have served in the past and who are now, in many cases, approaching or experiencing the trials of old age or other difficulties.

We support the need in this community through the grants we make to help our partner charities do their excellent work.

These may be purely Naval like the RNBT or the WRNS BT, or from the tri-service charities.

Over the past four years the reach of the RNRMC's funds has expanded enormously, from helping just four charities to providing support to 18 in this year's funding round.

With our new fundraising focus, and with the considerable assistance from Greenwich Hospital, we are now raising more money and so we are able to help more people.

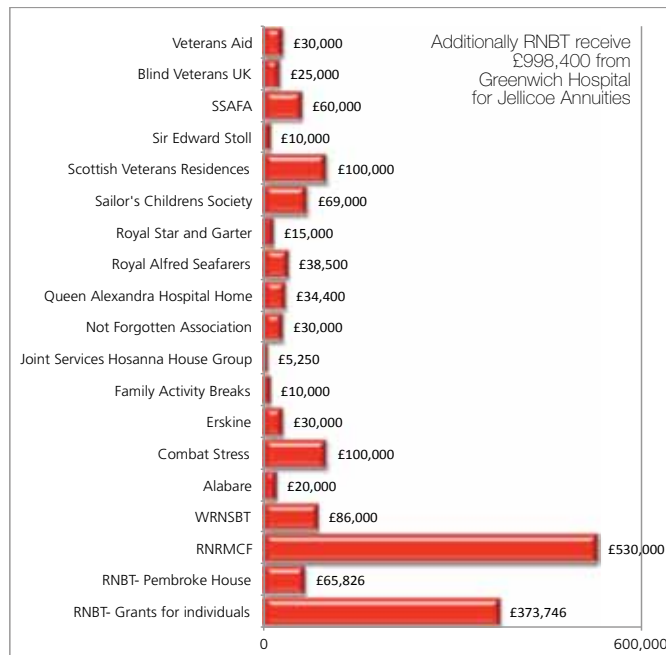
The chart (right) details what we have been able to give in the past six months, and you will see a separate profile of the great work conducted by the Children's Fund.

The breadth is astonishing, from the old to the very young, from those with mental health needs or alcohol problems, and in all parts of the United Kingdom.

Our grants programme touches every stage of need, from our support to SSAFA case workers, through the specialist support given by Blind Veterans UK or Veterans Aid, to the families of those who have lost loved ones or are just going through a tough time.

We focus on providing money to charities where the maximum number will benefit and our assistance helps thousands.

We all know that we are living longer and this brings added complication in health and welfare. With your continued help we can reach even more in the years ahead.



A long history of Naval caring

THIS month we are going to introduce you to one Naval charity that is over a century old, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund and to the Navy's oldest charity, Greenwich Hospital.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund was founded over 100 years ago, and helps thousands of children each year deal with the long-term psychological, emotional, physical, financial and social affects that can result from having a parent (of any rank/rate) work in the Royal Navy or Royal Marines.

Around 80 per cent of the children that the RNRMCF helps have parents who are currently serving.

The RNRMCF provides direct support to children from birth to 25 years when this is not available from family or statutory sources, by making financial grants or by providing or paying for goods, services and facilities.

Areas of support include childcare, stability and continuity of education, special needs, education, days out and in-home support in times of crisis.

An area of particular growth has been the charity's focus on assisting children with special needs.

This work now accounts for nearly half of its awards to beneficiaries.

Every penny donated makes a difference.

It can, for example, help to

provide childcare when a parent is left unable to care for their family, special days out at times of grief, essential items such as food and clothing at times of financial hardship, equipment for children with disabilities, in-home support in times of crisis and last, but certainly not least, peace of mind for our men and women in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

To reach as many children as possible, the charity also takes applications from a number of other sources including the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust and the Royal British Legion.

The RNRMCF also works with charities such as Royal Wansstead Children's Foundation and the Frank Buttle Trust to provide total care packages.

THE ABILITY to help more charities is down to the fact that the RNRMC have increased our sources of income.

A large part of that increase is down to the generosity of Greenwich Hospital.

Working since 1694 to assist the men and women of the 'Navie Royale', its income is largely split between the Royal Hospital School at Holbrook, and the RNRMC.

We distribute the Hospital's allocation of funds to naval beneficiaries and our close partnership lies at the centre of the focus that is being brought to the sector.



Greenwich Hospital

Who do I talk to about payroll giving?

THE MAN who can tell you everything you need to know about payroll giving is Dean Rogers – probably a familiar face to many of you from his long career in the RN.

Dean joined the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity in March 2011 after completing 35 years in the Submarine Service and reaching the position of Command Warrant Officer Submarines.

His last post in the Royal Navy was to promote payroll-giving to the Naval

Service on behalf of 2SL.

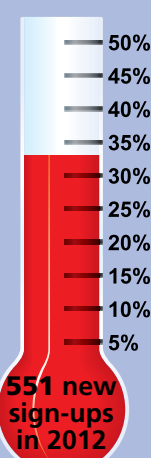
On retiring from the Navy he moved across to the RNRMC and continues to promote payroll giving.

For further information on payroll giving or to arrange a 40-minute presentation with discussion contact Dean using any of the methods below:

Dean Rogers
Payroll Giving Manager
dean.rogers@rnrmc.org.uk
Tel: 023 9254 8498
Mob: 07714 306178



We are pleased to announce that over 10,000 of you are now donating to the RNRMC through payroll giving – some third of the Naval service. A big thank you to all those people for your support; it will make a difference and change lives.



UPCOMING EVENTS



HMS Collingwood's annual Open Day takes place later this month, featuring the RNRMC Field Gun competition.

Please find us on the day at our stall near the main parade ground, close to the Senior Rates mess.

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Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity
Building 29, HMS Excellent
Whale Island
Portsmouth
Hampshire PO2 8ER
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HAVING written about the Gulf almost tirelessly for more than three decades, we've covered every angle.

Apart from this one. No, we're not talking about the impressive photograph of a US Navy Seahawk on the deck of HMS Daring, taken from the

ship's Lynx by LA(Phot) Keith Morgan who was leaning out precariously.

We're talking about Britain's most advanced warship, 8,500 tons of battleship grey, a £1bn investment, millions of moving parts all in the hands of 200 men and women, getting to grips with life in one of the world's most politically and environmentally-challenging regions.

Daring's now reached the half-way stage of her maiden deployment (yes, *tempus* does indeed *fugit*...) – allowing some of the souls aboard to take stock of the first significant 'run out' for a Type 45 destroyer.

Being a maiden deployment, naturally enough there's been an impressive inventory of firsts: first transit of Suez, first visit to Jordan, first international exercise, first test of new working rig, first visits to Kuwait, Dubai, Bahrain, Doha, first sandstorm.

Ah yes. For those who've not been to the Gulf (and despite it being the Royal Navy's main effort certainly for the past ten years, such folk do exist), it's not all sun, sun, sun.

The late winter/early spring months are often characterised by the *shamal* – which blows across Iraq, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, bringing with it sand and dust.

Daring might be a stealth ship from radar, but escaping from the elements proved a tad more challenging.

"Having never been to the

Gulf before, I was very surprised by the effect that a sandstorm in Doha had on the ship," says CPO(ET(WE)) Lee 'Slinger' Woods.

"Apart from getting everywhere the sand clung to the ship completely changing its colour."

Luckily, there were some lumpy seas to wash some of it away. The ship's Royal Marines detachment, we're told, particularly enjoyed the experience...

Daring was in the Qatari capital for the region's biggest naval showcase, the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference – known generally in its shortened form, DIMDEX.

It attracted warships from across the world; joining Daring and minehunter HMS Quorn alongside were vessels from Australia, France, India, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the USA.

With Britain's most advanced warship making her debut in the region, and at the show, Daring was considered the centrepiece

of the exhibition and received visits from many VIPs, including Fleet Commander Admiral George Zambellas, and delegates from other nations, particularly interested in the air defence radars and Sea Viper missile system.

Indeed, what's become evident after three or so months east of Suez is that everyone wants a piece of Daring – be it exercising at sea with the ship (the Americans, Australians, Kiwis, Pakistanis and Yemenis have already enjoyed that opportunity) or filing up the brow in port (such as military students from Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea and Oman who are attending the Kuwaiti Staff College and joined Daring alongside in Kuwait).

"What has surprised me so far about Daring's deployment?" asks warfare specialist AB Lynch, like his ship on his first deployment. "How interested other navies are in knowing and learning about HMS Daring's capabilities."

And they're learning fast. TWO American Carrier Strike Groups have already called upon Daring to work with them:

those of the USS Carl Vinson and her sister Abraham Lincoln.

The Carl Vinson leads US Carrier Strike Group One, while 'Abe' is the flagship of Group Nine (there are 11 such groups in all, comprising one carrier, one cruiser, two destroyers, one hunter-killer submarine and a support ship, plus an air group of more than 60 jets, helicopters and pistol-engined aircraft).

The apotheosis of this effort was HMS Daring working fully with the Carl Vinson and her impressive air wing of fast jets, providing a comprehensive air picture of the complex Gulf airspace courtesy of her potent radars and command system.

"Working with the US carriers and their air wings is the culmination of many months of training and hard work for the ship's company," explained Lt David Berry, one of two fighter controllers aboard Daring.

"For me, this is the pinnacle of my fighter controlling career and it is truly amazing to watch it all come together in this operational theatre. Taking control of F-18 Super Hornets in this busy operational environment is hugely rewarding."

It was, adds LS(AWW) Adam Sommerville, "a momentous occasion". He continues: "We've been part of the air defence for the entire Gulf region."

Working alongside the US carrier groups also allowed some cross-decking (the



D Days

Americans call it 'personnel engagement') – swapping sailors with several American ships, notably cruisers USS Cape St George and Bunker Hill, as well as the two carriers, allowing the two navies to share expertise and ideas and forge good working relationships.

That 'personnel engagement' wasn't just limited to seamen (ABs) and ensigns (midshipmen) and the like, but senior officers like Capt Don Gabrielson, Cape St George's Commanding Officer, who labelled Daring "a fantastic platform" – one which will "enhance" the overall Coalition mission east of Suez.

That mission has evolved from the long-standing duty of safeguarding Iraq's two oil platforms to a much wider mission of general maritime security, counter-piracy and working with friendly navies.

THE hub for Daring throughout her stint in the Gulf is Bahrain – headquarters of the US Fifth Fleet, the Combined Maritime Forces, the RN's senior headquarters in the region UK Maritime Component Commander, four British minehunters and supporting RFA vessels.

It was also where Daring formally took over the reins from HMS Argyll, Britain's previous Gulf guardian.

"Our port visit to Bahrain was a highlight," says CPO Woods. "A lot of RN personnel are based here so it was good to see what all the hype was about. It lived up to expectations."

Bahrain has a substantial ex-pat community known for royally hosting visiting RN vessels. Daring was no exception, as the local rugby club invited the ship to take part in a 10s tournament.

"We played in excess of ten games in ten days and finished runners up. The hospitality from the rugby club was amazing, we couldn't thank them enough," says LS Sommerville.

The rugby team also enjoyed a run out in Kuwait, against the Scorpions. In what was described as a 'bruising encounter' on a pitch known as the sandpit, the sailors and marines were beaten by the locals 29-14.

VERY early in their lives, the 45s were branded 'iPod warships' by the tabloids – according to Fleet Street every sailor has a special iPod dock to accommodate their 21st Century personal entertainment needs, you see. Or not. It's called a 'plug'... which at least is a step up from previous-generation ships.

As is the overall accommodation; our sample of the ship's company shows it's a "massive improvement" on what's gone before.

There was some concern that the small mess decks – there are no more than six sailors to a cabin, however junior the rank – might denude the Type 45s of traditional mess deck spirit.

Although the cabins are indeed small, the junior rates have a 'super mess', three large connecting compartments – the first mixed-mess ever built in a Royal Navy destroyer. Stokers alongside chefs, writers, dabbers, reggies, rather than compartmentalised as so often occurred in older vessels.

Says LS Sommerville:

"Sharing the mess deck with the other departments can be quite entertaining and brings all the junior rates together. This brings more of a family life to the Type 45."

"When you need space and time to think you have somewhere to escape too."

The wardroom isn't as large as the junior rates' mess – it's also a more understated affair. But its members certainly appreciate the roomy nature of the ship.

"Due to the size of Daring – especially when I compare this to my previous appointments on mine counter-measures vessels as a clearance diver – there is so much more space in which to work and live, making being deployed away from home a little more manageable," says

Lt Cdr Tim O'Neill, Daring's principal warfare officer.

CPO Woods adds: "Compared to the Type 42 destroyers I have served on the biggest difference has to be the massive improvement in the accommodation. The beds are considerably larger and being a senior rate having a two-man cabin is a massive improvement too."

And from PO(AWT) Simon Storey: "Normally, long periods at sea, living in close proximity with so many other people is very difficult."

"The Type 45 has moved forward into the modern era with its bigger accommodation, this enables the serving sailor at sea to have more personal space and a better quality of life."

OF COURSE Daring is not here on a cruise. She's here as a warship on an operational deployment.

"I've been surprised by the ease with which Daring has made the transition from being a trials platform as the first Type 45 destroyer to being a highly-focused and operationally-capable warship stationed in a very dynamic and complex theatre," says Lt Cdr O'Neill.

There is still a feeling of 'writing the Type 45 manual' for her sisters that follow Daring east of Suez.

While older 42s and, more recently, 23s know every inch of the Gulf, the daily routines for Daring are similar – but not identical – to her forebears.

"Most of the daily working routines and operational duties are all new," says PO Storey. "It requires careful management to enable us to set the standard operating procedures so that future Type 45s that deploy to this region have a starting point that they can take further."

We'll leave the final word to marine engineer LET(ME) Anthony Bristow. He's very proud that the machinery he looks after generates enough power (46 megawatts) to provide electricity for a town of 80,000 people (about the size of Bedford).

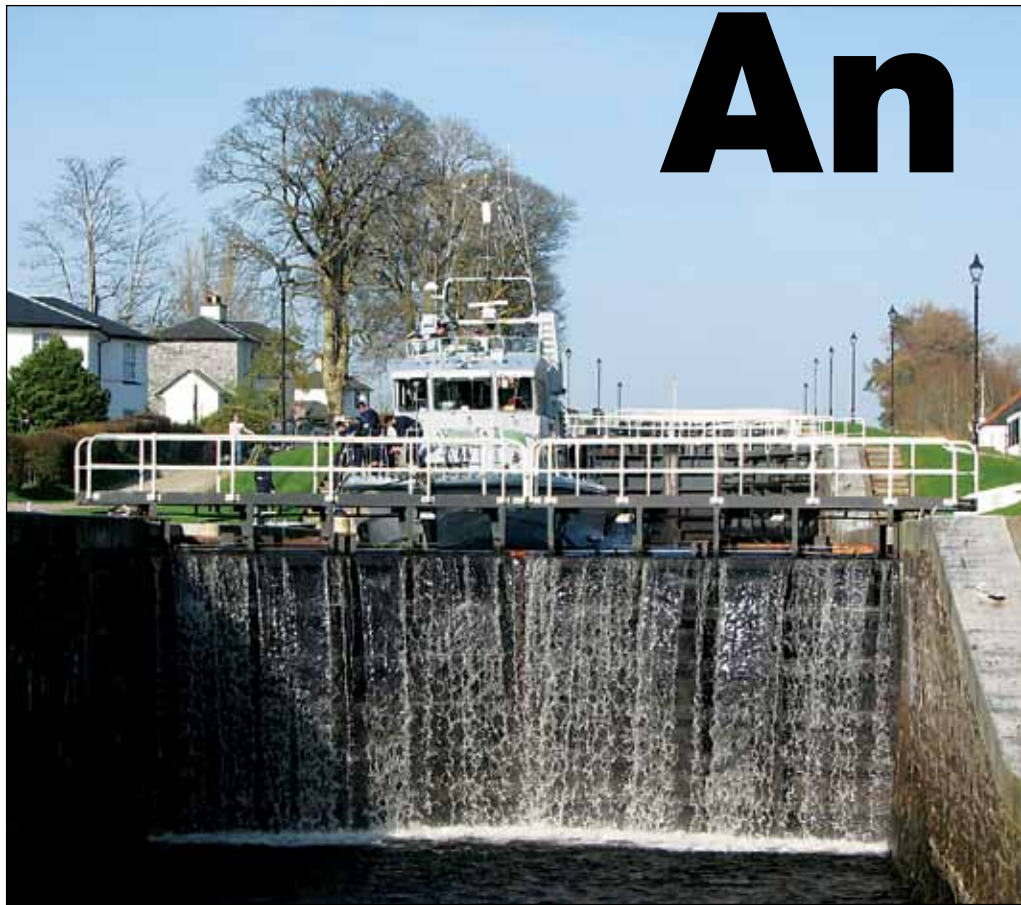
He's even prouder about what the rest of his ship can do, though.

"Nothing has surprised me about Daring's maiden voyage. She has proved herself to be a very capable warship, capable of carrying out her primary role as an air defence platform."

"She has set a new standard not just in the Royal Navy, but to every other navy in the world."



pictures: la(photos) keith morgan and caroline davies



● (Above) HMS Archer makes her way down Neptune's Staircase – a flight of nine locks – on the Caledonian Canal at Banavie; (left) Commanding Officer Lt Michael Hutchinson goes through basic rules of seamanship before HMS Archer leaves Fort Augustus on her way to Corpach, near Fort William, and the Western Isles; (below) Lt Hutchinson keeps a close eye on proceedings as his ship heads through a lock; (bottom left) Navigator's Yeoman AB(Sea) Victoria Speed supervises two students as HMS Archer heads down Neptune's Staircase, with Ben Nevis in the background; (bottom right) HMS Archer alongside at Fort Augustus at the end of a day of exercises on Loch Ness



An Archer in

AS deployments go, this was hard to beat, writes Mike Gray.

Majestic mountains reflected in cold deep chasms, but it wasn't Norway.

Sparkling blue water and cloudless blue skies, but it wasn't the Caribbean.

This was the first leg of Aberdeen University RN Unit's Easter deployment, and the 12 novice sailors struck lucky – a trip down the Caledonian Canal in the warmest March weather on record.

Not that they would be put out by bad weather – a handful of the OCs and Midshipmen are a year or two more experienced than their colleagues, having crossed a choppy North Sea to Scandinavia last summer and still come back for more, despite the P2000's reputation for rolling on wet grass.

But for the three days I joined HMS Archer, there was no need to concentrate on keeping your lunch down, or minding your feet on a pitching wet deck.

Instead it was a learning experience from start to finish, of as much value to those who had no intention of joining the Senior Service as those who had – while enjoying the ever-changing panorama of the sun-drenched Highlands.

Archer's four-week Easter deployment saw her plot a course from Aberdeen to Inverness, through the Caledonian Canal and out into the Western Isles, eventually reaching Stornaway before making her way back through the canal to her home port, part of that time in company with Glasgow URNU's HMS Smiter.

It might seem obvious that operating a P2000 is far easier than operating a destroyer, frigate or any of Archer's bigger 'sisters' in the Fleet – but it is not that simple.

For a start, Archer sails under a White Ensign, so has to match all the standards of the big-ship Navy.

But many of her complement on such deployments are not imbued with the ethos of the Senior Service; coming down heavy on a future 'mover and shaker' who has shown enough interest in the Royal Navy to sign up to an URNU would be massively counter-productive.

And all the admin, maintenance and training still has to be done by a ship's company of just five – not a lot of scope for delegation within the various one-man departments.

Aberdeen is the oldest of the URNUs, having been formed in 1967, and although there is a steady flow of students through the organisation, each URNU tends to take on a slightly different character to the others – to some extent reflecting the character of its CO, who is both the captain of the patrol boat and head of

the unit.

The last intake at Aberdeen was a competitive affair, with four candidates for every place, and each one was interviewed by Lt Hutchinson, a warfare officer who trained as a fighter controller, in consultation with the Executive Officer (CPO(UW) Alf Ramsay) and the cox'n back at Aberdeen.

"They all got a 20-minute interview, and in that interview you have got to see how they respond to you and how you respond to them," said Lt Hutchinson, who reluctantly relinquished command in the middle of last month after two-and-a-half years in charge.

"They have got to be people who are clearly intelligent and outward-going, or someone the unit will be good for.

"You are looking at the leaders of tomorrow – people who have been bothered to come along and see what it's about and are not bothered about giving up some of their time for it.

"They are a pretty good bunch, and in my time here I have only had good people, with just a couple of exceptions.

"The formalities of a frigate or destroyer could not work on a small ship, though we are as formal as we can be.

"Leaving harbour, handovers, briefings are formal; man overboard, fire, floods – they all have to be treated seriously.

"While we are conscious of the way the Navy does it, we have got to teach the students and do it safely.

"And I think they appreciate we are showing them the way the Navy does its business and trying to involve them in every way we can."

As Archer headed down the sheltered waters of the Great Glen, the prospect of wider horizons loomed.

"We will be out at sea soon, and for some it will be the first time they have been on the ship in open water," said Lt Hutchinson.

"Some will be quite nervous about it, because up to now it has been a big ship on a small canal, and soon it will be a small ship in a very big, wide open space.

"It will be daunting for some but we have got to encourage them. They will be outside their comfort zone but we will show them that they can do things they have never done before.

"For me it has been fantastic – incredibly rewarding.

"I feel hugely privileged to have had an influence on their lives, and to have worked with the people I have worked with, because they have been brilliant, and to have had the opportunity to do the job because it's been highly-rewarding professionally and personally.

"I would not lie and say at times it has not been immensely challenging, but without the opportunity to challenge yourself I do not think you grow or progress."

During his period of command, Archer has earned her keep – she has covered 10,500 miles, and last year saw her roam as far

as Norway (close to the Arctic Circle), Ireland, Shetland and the South Coast.

Between mid-March and November 2011 she was alongside in Aberdeen for barely three weeks, making her one of the most deployed ships in the Navy.

At one point during last year's URNU squad exercise she was at sea for 50 hours with just three hours alongside, with Lt Hutchinson on watchkeeping duties.

"It's one of those things where you learn how to manage risks and your people as well," he said.

"The students are under Naval regulations, with the same powers of punishment as a frigate or destroyer.

"But they are students and they have got a totally different mentality.

"For them it's not a game but it's not their way of life either.

"They take it seriously but they do not have the same understanding of the importance that their actions will have.

"You have to show them and educate them and try to make them get it.

It's really great – really, really good fun.

"But when you are in the middle of the North Sea you have to deal with things yourself. Personnel issues come down to you getting people to haul their socks up.

"Or you might be at sea with a machinery breakdown – we had a stern seal fail once and water was coming into the engine room. We had decisions to make.

"It was fine, but at first it was something to think about.

"There are all sorts of examples. Having a very poorly student on board in the Shetland Islands – how do you get them back, and who travels with them? Lots of things to think about.

"I would never dare say we are as busy as a frigate or destroyer, because we are not – or any other ship in the Royal Navy, for that matter.

"But in terms of what we have got to offer, and for the number of people we have got and the capability we have got on board we more than pull our weight.

"The boat itself is not really that different to a Sunseeker. If I had a Sunseeker with as many beds as Archer, would it be any more capable?

"No – it's the ship's company that makes it such a good training platform – all we have got to do is paint it grey and put a White Ensign on the back.

"It's not got anything you wouldn't find on a Broads cruiser.

"It's the people that give up their time to sit in the mess square to go through different aspects of the Navy to see that the kids are getting every possible thing out of the trip and to see the ship is a little piece of the Navy and we are trying to keep the core values and ethos you see in every other ship."

Lt Hutchinson's personality is evident on the ship – a deliberate state of affairs.

"We look at the people we have worked with before and cherry-



the Highlands

pick their best qualities and stamp our own character as well.

“One was very easy-going and willing to listen, very approachable and always quick to smile – that is what I have always thought I would like to be.

“He never shouted at people – they will shut down if you do.

“If you can, keep them inside, even if it's not going so well; try to make the student feel they have achieved something.

“If you are in their ears, with a layered approach, suggesting ‘Think about this...’, when it gets more difficult you might have to prompt them more heavily, and afterwards you say ‘Do you understand what happened here?’ – you debrief straight afterwards.”

The amount of responsibility shouldered by each of the crew on a P2000 is impressive, right down to the Nav's Yeoman, AB(Sea) Victoria Speed, who is in charge of the fo'c'sle during seamanship manoeuvres and may be looking after four or five students while also playing her part in handling the ship.

Her chief duty is the care and updating of charts, but not only will she get a broad range of tasks (including Officer of the Day and maintenance of sea survival equipment) but her leadership skills will be developed way beyond that expected of an able seaman in other parts of the Fleet.

There are no short cuts, despite the bijou nature of the ship – the Union Jack goes up every time the first line goes ashore, and comes down when the last line is recovered – an evolution carried out 15 or 16 times on the passage from Fort Augustus to Corpach as Archer goes in and out of locks.

Similarly the XO, MEO and WEO all have numerous roles to fulfil in addition to their ‘main job’.

The XO is also the Medical Officer, Logistics Officer and buffer, for example, the MEO is responsible for the engines, hull and associated systems (as well as often helming the ship in more tricky manoeuvres) and in the WEO's case there is a chance to tinker with the diesel engines, as that happens to be LET(ME) Al Causer's speciality, though his job on board is to look after all electrical equipment, radio, radar, gyro and the deck aft.

“Normally AB Speed would have two or three people above her in such roles in a larger ship, so it is quite a big plateful,” said CPO Ramsay.

“But it will build her confidence for her Leading Hands course and will improve her seamanship skills as well.

“Generally, if you have got the right attitude for small ships you will do very well on these.

“You have to think for yourself, and we are quite well-informed as we have a direct link with the CO all the time.

“We are virtually living in each other's pockets – it is a Navy within a Navy.

“I thought the P2000s were going to be a bit of a change of scene, pottering around the country, but you work hard here, especially when you think we are looking after 12 people many of whom have never been to sea before.”

The three days on the 62-mile Caledonian Canal – built to provide work in the Highlands at the time of Napoleon, as well as providing safe passage for ships (including frigates) between the North Sea and the West Coast – gave the dozen students a chance to learn the ropes.

And that is in the literal sense as well – with almost 30 locks and ten swing bridges on the 20 miles or so of man-made waterway which link the lochs of the Glen, there were plenty of chances to try their hand at going alongside, leaving berth and ship handling.

A day of exercises on a placid Loch Ness allowed the students to watch a man-overboard exercise, and to practise transfers between Archer and the RNLI's lifeboat

(giving them all a chance to streak across the loch in the high-performance RIB).

There were rope-throwing contests, and each student was marked out of ten for their command of Archer as she negotiated locks (although MEO CPO(ETME) Craig Gregory proved a hard taskmaster by scoring either 0, 0.5 or 1...).

But they also had their own tasks to perform.

Ashleigh McLeish was Senior Midshipman – the link between the ship's company and the students – for the first leg, which ended at Dunstaffnage near Oban.

Scott Mackie – who has a place at Dartmouth awaiting him – James Holton and Jessica MacLeod were watch leaders.

And Emma Watson was CATO or Catering Officer, who had to organise all aspects of catering on board – menus, cooking rotas, shopping, checking the two domestic freezers on board, supplying three meals a day for up to 20 people.

There were no complaints about the scrum during our transit of the canal (mainly because the students have to prepare and cook it all themselves), with the duty chefs serving up a particularly good roast beef on the idiosyncratic range.

And there are not many ships in the Fleet where the XO and a watch leader can nip up the road to buy ice-lollies for the entire complement while waiting for permission to leave the berth.

And although the relaxed pace of the hot day meant there was time for an ice-lolly, once again there is a fine line to walk between fun and enjoyment and displaying a professional face to those ashore (ie on the banks of the canal) to whom everyone on board is presumed to be a sailor.

Every opportunity to put in some training was taken up with enthusiasm.

Victoria Speed gave Charlie Mintowt-Czyz an impromptu lesson in using the bosun's call before Colours one evening, while Ashleigh compiled a comprehensive guide as to who does what and when during such ceremonies.

Stopping in the shadow of 13th-century Urquhart Castle on Loch Ness for lunch allowed Lt Hutchinson ten minutes to go through the art of anchoring, reminding them that the equipment and size of ship may change but the theory and principles remain the same.

The students sat around the CO and XO on the foredeck paying close attention, a scene which was repeated later in the deployment on the subject of entering and leaving locks.

For that reason URNU boats need crew members who are not only good at their jobs, but teach others into the bargain.

Their ‘pupils’ might be undergraduates on URNU day-runs or deployments, or groups of trainee officers from Dartmouth on Specialist Fleet Time who also join the P2000s – part of the 1st Patrol Boat Squadron – for short spells of navigation training.

“The P2000 is such a fantastic training platform,” said Lt Hutchinson.

“We are not in a rush like a frigate or destroyer – if someone gets something wrong we can spin on the spot, go back and start again.

“We can engineer days to allow ten or 15 navigation runs for them.”

And the ship's company also benefit from the training, with key roles in man-overboard and fire exercises, boat-handling and navigation.

With the March sun beating down on Fort Augustus the students were in good spirits.

“This is my first full day on my first deployment, and it has been brilliant,” said history student OC Aidan Watt, whose brother is a former member of the URNU and is now a sub-lieutenant.

OC Jamie North, studying engineering, had spent no longer than three hours at a time on board before this deployment, and found his initial apprehension about spending a week in a confined space with people he had barely met quickly evaporated.

Living space on board HMS Archer is cosy, to say the least – there is not enough room at the table for all to sit down and eat (true also of the ‘wardroom’ or crew's mess) and when a full contingent of students is on board some of the ship's company have to spend the night in bed-and-breakfast accommodation as there are not enough bunks to go around.

Briefings on the bridge are a tight squeeze, and the galley is no more than an alcove off the mess square.

Archer also had one additional soul on board for two days – former Naval officer Paul Engeham, now working for the MOD in Whitehall, who commanded Glasgow URNU two decades ago.

Paul said not much had changed in the URNU ethos since his time, which he described as one of the happiest times of his life “and one of the most satisfying things I have

ever done.”

The value of spreading the word about the Navy can be seen from Paul's cohort of students, most of whom he is still in touch with and many of whom benefited from the discipline and teamwork to go on to senior positions in commerce and in Government departments.

“I see the same spark in today's students as I did in Glasgow, and there is a great mixture of talent here,” said Paul.

“Both Glasgow and Aberdeen are very strong at the moment, and it has been an absolute joy to be on board.”

Working Archer up the flight of five locks at Fort Augustus attracted a sizeable crowd of onlookers, and for many it would be one of the rare occasions they would see a White Ensign in their local canal, harbour or river, as bigger RN ships cannot gain access.

And despite those incongruous moments you don't expect to experience on a deployment – waiting for a train to cross a bridge before proceeding, passing the front doors of a chippy and a sweetshop, cruising past golf courses – you are never in any doubt that this is the real Royal Navy.

Just on a slightly smaller scale.

● (Right) Students Jamie North and Ashleigh McLeish take a spin in the RNLI's Loch Ness lifeboat as it exercises with HMS Archer; (below) Archer's WEO LET(ME) Al Causer demonstrates the art of throwing a rope ashore; (below right) the lock-keeper's dog casts its eye over the efforts of the students as Archer passes through Laggan Locks into Ceann Loch and Loch Lochy en route for Corpach; (bottom of page) Archer reaches the top of the flight of five locks at Fort Augustus



Raiders



pictures: la(phot) martin carney, hms bulwark

IF YOU want something which encapsulates 'Arctic' and 'action' you can do no better than this image...

Dressed in their snow camouflage, Royal Marines of 42 Commando leap out of small landing craft into the icy waters of Malangen Fjord in northern Norway.

In the distance, their mother ship HMS Bulwark is 'docked down' – her stern flooded so the dock can launch landing craft – while the Norwegian missile patrol boat KNM Skudd and fast gunboat Kopås stand guard.

On the shore a commando beachmaster makes sure the landings go as planned.

What you cannot see is the King of Norway, Harald V, observing proceedings.

Nor can you hear the 21-gun salute reverberating around the steep sides of the fjord in his honour.

The Norwegian monarch was the VIP guest as Exercise Cold Response, NATO's regular Arctic war games, moved into its climactic final stage between the northern ports of Harstad and Tromsø – a good 160 miles inside the Arctic Circle.

Thousands of foreign soldiers, sailors and airmen were guests of King Harald and his compatriots for the ten-day exercise, with

Bulwark leading the UK's participation.

The king, an honorary colonel in the Royal Marines, spent 90 minutes visiting Kilo Company and Dutch marines – training alongside the Britons – at their beach landing site.

He witnessed an amphibious assault to forge a beachhead – and once said beachhead was secure, took time to chat to the men – the great majority of whom have seen recent service in Afghanistan.

At the end of the demonstration Bulwark marked the occasion with a 21-gun salute in the monarch's honour.

Capt Martin Triggol RM, who explained to King Harald how the amphibious beach unit works, said: "He was very interested in the level of expertise required to make all this happen."

Although the demonstration was cold – as evidenced by the snow on the slopes and shores of the fjord – the weather was far better than some which Bulwark has experienced during Cold Response.

"Unusually, we had calm sunny weather to show off the complexity of amphibious operations delivered by those that do it best: the Royal Navy and Royal Marines," said Capt Alex Burton, the flagship's Commanding Officer.

"It is what we do and it doesn't get much better than this."



of the lost Arc(tic)



The Norwegian king's visit came on the penultimate day of Cold Response – by which time Bulwark was unexpectedly leading Britain's involvement in the exercise after HMS Illustrious (pictured left off Harstad in company with the flagship) was forced to withdraw prematurely following a bump with a tug.

After transferring some of her embarked commandos, Lusty parted company with Bulwark in Harstad, leaving the flagship to co-ordinate the final few days of the exercise which shifted to the waters around Malangen, just to the southwest of Tromsø.

In addition to Bulwark and Illustrious, the UK's contribution to the NATO war games included HMS Liverpool, on her final run out before decommissioning, Commando Helicopter Force Sea Kings and Lynx and the Mobile Air Operations Team – who find, establish and run helicopter landing sites in remote areas – and a Lynx Mk 8 from 815 NAS. The Dutch assault ship Rotterdam also served as a springboard for the marines, aided by two Cougar helicopters.

The staff included personnel from Naval headquarters in Portsmouth, the Maritime Battle Staff at HMS Excellent, and reservists from the panoply of naval specialisations including logistics, Fleet Air Arm, amphibious operations and media.

"The complexity of amphibious operations are difficult to get over," stressed Cdre Paddy McAlpine,

Commander UK Task Group.

"Transporting marines, vehicles and equipment to the right place at the right time, usually under cover of darkness, in freezing conditions, from three different ships, using helicopters and landing craft, is a huge challenge.

"It's been the culmination of thousands of hours of training that's required to ensure that our people can make this happen. These skills need to be tested regularly and Cold Response has been an excellent way of doing this.

"It was an excellent exercise. I'm delighted with the way we worked so closely with our Dutch colleagues, building on our long-standing relationship, and I'm convinced that all personnel who took part will have benefitted hugely from the experience of operating in such a harsh environment."

He's convinced, but let's ask some of those involved...

Twenty-eight-year-old Mne Chris Clay, Kilo Coy 42 Cdo, has been in the Corps for two and a half years and has already seen service in Afghanistan, but not been to the Arctic until now.

"It was my first experience of skiing – which we did with the Dutch. That was brilliant," he said.

"The exercise itself finished with a bang for us as we had to go and relieve a Dutch company that had been held down by enemy tanks. That was pretty exciting."

Reservist Lt Kat 'Hattie' Jacques is a STOM (Ship to Objective Manoeuvre) watchkeeper.

Still none the wiser? The STOM team co-ordinate all the movements of people and landing craft that are required for a complicated amphibious operation.

"Cold Response has been a great experience," she enthused. "I joined the RNR Amphibious Warfare Branch because we go to sea and are immediately part of the organisation.

"I've deployed to the Caribbean for my STOM course, the Far East and now Norway. I'm certainly seeing the world!"

In all some 16,300 soldiers, sailors and airmen from 14 nations took part with Canada, France, the Netherlands, Great Britain, Sweden and the United States providing the bulk of the participants.

The exercise tested the response of international forces to the fictitious Nerthus region of Borgland, which had been invaded by forces from neighbouring Gardarland.

When diplomacy failed, the task force pushed into the region by land and sea. Raids were conducted to wear down the enemy's forces before the amphibious forces withdrew and sailed further north to conduct a seaborne assault at the same time as the land forces were closing in.

It was all played out against the

backdrop of the fjords with their deep, but narrow waters, regular snowstorms and temperatures which could be as mild as around 0°C or ferocious as -40°C with wind chill.

At 30° below or lower, all activity outside stopped, while temperatures hovering around 0°C actually hampered operations as slush, mud and sleet made movements by land and air respectively more challenging.

All of which make for very useful lessons – not least as the tempo of operations in the Middle East and Afghanistan over the past decade have often diverted the UK's amphibious forces away from their traditional winter 'playground'.

And whatever the environment, amphibious warfare remains the most complex operation any nation's military can undertake, as Bulwark's Capt Burton explains.

"It is not simply park the ship and offload it. In war – and therefore in training – we have to take account of the environment, enemy forces in the air, sea and on land, co-ordinating people into boats and naval helicopters all to arrive on target, in the right order, at the right time, to achieve the battle winning effect," he said.

"Few navies deliver this successfully and most aspirants look to the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Fleet Air Arm, with our war-proven capability, for guidance: on the sea, in the air and on the land."





● The Massed Bands of the Royal Marines at Finale of the 2012 Mountbatten Festival of Music
Picture: Les Scrivner

Bandies played their hearts out

ONCE again the massed bands of the Royal Marines filled the Royal Albert Hall to capacity, this time for the 40th anniversary of the Mountbatten Festival of Music.

I cannot describe how magnificent the spectacle was and how it impressed the packed house.

The combined bands played their hearts out as one. The Corps of Drums, 43 in all, were immaculate. Considering they were recruited from different RM bands all over the country, their precision and co-ordination were perfect.

The whole Royal Marines Band Service is to be congratulated.

Now for my annual moan. At 94 this year I am still able to rise to my feet for the Regimental March. Not so for 98 per cent of the assembly.

I am still ashamed for those who wear the Globe and Laurel and refuse to admit it.

I was pleased to note that this year those standing included the Corps RSM, Ally McGill (QGM) and his party of RSMs from different units.

Who would expect anything less from those who lead the Corps?

My companion in the next seat, a three-badge Royal with 23 years' service, told me that by standing up the people behind me would not be able to see.

So now we have it. I shall not raise the subject again. (But I shall still stand up.)

All in all it was a night to remember and I have heard nothing but praise from all who attended.

I am looking forward to next year, and God willing, to 2014, the 350th anniversary of our Corps. I wonder what will be in store for us on that very special occasion?

– Bernard Hallas, RM, York

I could spill the beans on the Leander lark...

I MAY be able to shed some light on the incident off Cornwall in the 1970s referred to in the letter from Gareth Evans (April).

Whilst serving in a Ton-class minesweeper, attached to a well-known South Devon officers' training college as a navigation training tender, I remember a balmy summer afternoon in 1977.

After a navex which had concluded in the Whitsand Bay area, our commanding officer decided we would anchor for an evening barbecue.

We noticed that there was a fair crowd out enjoying the sunshine on the Banjo pier at Looe, so as a treat the CO thought it would be a good idea to give the taxpayers a close-up of one of Her Majesty's finest war canoes.

We slowly closed to within a cable or so to the end of the jetty before executing a smart pirouette, which produced a swirl of sand and mud, then withdrew and anchored about a mile offshore.



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tippie to the writer of our top letter.

This month's winner is: **Rob Clifford** – we're hoping the rum might loosen his tongue...

During this manoeuvre and at the closest point of approach to the jetty, the XO shouted across

to the admiring civilian "goofers" and said: "is this 'ere, Fowey?", which caused much amusement to the members of the ship's company and, also, we thought, to our intrigued audience.

This encounter was, however, reported back to Flag Officer Plymouth and in due course our valiant CO was invited to attend FOPs HQ at Mountwise to clarify events.

Could this be the mystery ship in Mr Evans' story?

The name of the ship, (which often visited Mevagissey coincidentally during the '70s), and the names of the CO and XO, (both now well-known, prominent and respected personalities in the Plymouth and Torbay areas) could be prised from me (or my lips remain sealed), should a sufficient amount of amber fluid be passed my way.

– Rob Clifford
Warrant Officer retired
Newton Abbot,
Devon

Opinion

THE way the Navy says goodbye to its leavers is a recurring theme and can be something of a sore point, judging by the postbag we get on the issue.

The letter we published in April from PO Kipper MacRae recording his disappointment at leaving the Service after 33 years without a formal goodbye was one of several on a similar theme over the past couple of years.

Mr MacRae's letter prompted a reply (see above) from the Warrant Officer Naval Service, WO1 Terry Casey.

WO1 Casey points out that there is a system for marking retirement, and much thought has gone into it.

If the guidance is properly followed, every rating who has put in the appropriate years is entitled to a Valedictory Certificate from the Chief of Naval Personnel (Second

Sea Lord) and in some cases a personal letter from the Commanding Officer.

This is not a formulaic 'one size fits all', it goes into some detail about the leaver's career and contribution to the Service.

Of course, this is still a long way from the US Navy tradition of congratulatory speeches, presentations and a band, which one or two of our correspondents rather envied.

But by and large, most of our leavers probably feel more comfortable with the understated Royal Navy way of formal goodbyes.

As for the informal ones, a leaver's oppo should be able to organise a really memorable run-ashore...

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD

Shackleton was 'no hero'

WHILST delighted to read that the 1916 James Caird voyage and the crossing of South Georgia are to be recreated, (*Navy News*, April, page 35) the wrong person – Shackleton – is being celebrated.

The real heroes were Lt Frank Worsley and Petty Officer Tom Crean.

Worsley was the captain of the *Endurance* (Shackleton was unqualified to command a ship) and an expert navigator. Crean was a hugely experienced polar explorer.

Shackleton, on the other hand, failed at everything he set out to do. On Scott's Discovery expedition he had to be carried on the sledge and was sent home early by Scott.

On his attempt to reach the South Pole during the Nimrod expedition, both the base camp and the attempt itself fell apart through Shackleton's desperately poor leadership.

Having reached 97 miles from the Pole, it is clear that Shackleton's companions had had enough.

He was referred to in their diaries as "an old woman. Always panicking" and "hopeless".

His famous phrase "Death lay ahead and food behind" was made up at Port Said on the way home.

Instead of showing leadership qualities, Shackleton routinely abandoned his men.

He always dressed up his actions by saying "OK, chaps, I'm going to get help" – which was Shackleton-speak for "If anyone's getting out of here, it's going to be me."

He claimed that he always brought his men home, and never lost a man.

This conveniently forgets Sub Lt Aeneas Mackintosh, the Reverend Arnold Spencer-Smith, and the civilian, Victor Hayward of the Ross sea party.

Hayward thought that Shackleton's demands were "impossible", but Mackintosh felt they were "honour-bound... in the British manner" to carry them out. All died.

Demonstrating a mean-spirited attitude, Shackleton refused the Polar Medal to one of his crew who pointed out (correctly) that he was making a mistake.

The medal was later awarded to the man's descendants by the Royal Navy's Hydrographer.

Shackleton also altered the *Endurance* expedition photograph to make himself look more heroic. Interestingly enough, the modern expedition is being led by a Royal Marine.

The only Royal Marine that Shackleton chose to take with him was Capt Thomas Orde Lees, the head of the Corp's physical training school.

A very "clubbable" man, Shackleton used him throughout



● PO Tom Crean rears an Antarctic family – Sally's quadruplets, the pups by Sally and Samson: Roger, Nell, Toby and Nelson, Shackleton expedition, 1914-1916
Picture by Frank Hurley/
National Library of Australia

the expedition as a butt of his sarcasm.

Worsley did not want Shackleton on the James Caird voyage and argued with him over the amount of ballast the boat required (Shackleton had very little experience in small boats).

Shackleton's demands were, however, met, resulting in "unnecessary misery" during the voyage. The duration of which, the only activity Shackleton carried out was to hold the legs of Worsley as the lieutenant took "sun-shots" with his sextant.

On arrival at King Haakon Bay, almost the first thing Shackleton did was to abandon three of his men.

Lt Worsley served in the war and did great work ramming U-boats whilst earning the nickname 'Depth-charge Bill'.

PO Crean was promoted to Warrant Officer during the war before retiring to run a pub he named 'The Pole Star'.

Shackleton spent the war giving speeches in Australia and South America until it was practically over. He was then made a major in the Army and sent as storekeeper at Murmansk. He lasted two months before resigning to get involved with shady land deals in Russia.

When this went wrong, he had to sell the rights to his ghost-written memoirs to pay off his debts.

He died on another failed expedition in 1922, his wife refusing to have his body sent back to England.

I wish the modern expedition well, but let us not forget the true heroes who brought the original expedition out safely.

– E C Coleman FRGS
Author of *The Royal Navy in Polar Exploration, Volumes I & II*,
Bishop Norton, Lincolnshire

The proper way to say goodbye

I WAS saddened to read ex-PO (SC) MacRae's letter (April) regarding the lack of recognition for long service.

A great deal of effort has gone into ensuring that all those who leave the Royal Navy do so with dignity.

I would like to bring to the attention of your readership RN Temporary Memorandum 212/11 which sets out, in detail, the action to be taken by line management for ratings leaving the Royal Navy.

It is also worthy of note that as from May 1 2012 all applications that are eligible for a Second Sea Lord's Valedictory Certificate, under the rules set out in RNTM 212/11, are now to be sent to NAVY-2SLCNPT INFOMGR (Brown, Derek PO).

I hope this clarifies the matter and prevents any further occurrences.

– WO1 Terry Casey,
Warrant Officer (Naval Service)
Navy Command HQ,
Leach Building,
Whale Island, Portsmouth

Our Daring captain

FEBRUARY'S edition contained a wonderful article recounting Operation Cerberus (*Channel Dash* supplement, page iv) and a photograph of Lt Cdr Eugene Esmonde with comrades from the Swordfish Squadron.

Alongside him is a tall Lieutenant who surely is Percy Gick, later Rear Admiral Phillip Gick, but always known as Percy.

He had an outstanding war record which included part of the Swordfish attack on the Bismarck; he was the only pilot who actually went round twice because he was not satisfied he had the right approach to hit with his torpedo.

His honours included the DFC and Bar and twice mentioned in dispatches and later the CB and OBE; his exploits throughout his career are legendary.

We as members of the HMS Daring (First Commission 1952–54) remember him with great affection and pride as our captain from September 1952 till February 1954.

He took over a very unhappy and low-morale ship and quickly turned it into a happy and efficient unit.

He died at the age of 88 in January 2002.

– Owen Simpson
Uley, Gloucestershire

Navy League

FURTHER to Lester May's letter (February) about football team names which bear the same name as HM ships, I would like to add the subject of sporting names.

There was a submarine in World War 2 built in Chatham called HMS Umpire and an Insect Class boat called HMS Cricket.

When looking for a ship called HMS Scorer, the nearest I could find was another submarine called HMS Sportsman – I suppose this could encompass all the sports not specifically named.

– Peter Danks, Southbourne,
Emsworth, Hants



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Editorial
Managing editor:
Sarah Fletcher 023 9272 4194
Editor: Mike Gray
023 9272 5136
News editor: Richard
Hargreaves 023 9272 4163
Production editor:
Helen Craven 023 9272 5067
Fax 023 9283 8845
edit@navynews.co.uk

Business
Business manager:
Lisa Taw 023 9272 0494
Subscriptions 023 9272 6284
subscriptions@navynews.co.uk
Accounts 023 9272 0686
Advertising 023 9272 5062
advertising@navynews.co.uk
Fax 023 9273 4448
General enquiries and archives:
023 9272 5061/5064

CLASSIC JACK

BY TUGS



King of the racing sticks

THE PHOTOGRAPH of WO1 Stephenson and his three colleagues with their pace sticks (*Comment*, December) brought back a flood of memories.

The pace sticks carried by the team are what are known as racing sticks, and back in the 1980s-90s were made, at least for the NCOs of the Guards, by one Staff Sergeant Drodge at Pirbright.

I met Ernie Drodge when I was a medical rep calling on the MOs at the depot and, being also a drill instructor for our local Scout and Guide band at that time, I needed a pace stick.

It was the run-up to the competition, and all the NCOs were honing their armoury skills by walking their sticks everywhere they went, and one of them directed me to the armoury, where SSgt Drodge was employed.

I asked if he'd make me a stick, but he did even better, he sold me the fittings, and I made my own stick, obtaining the seasoned beech from a scouting colleague who worked for a large timber merchants.

Having finished it, I went back to show it to Ernie Drodge, and he was much impressed with the timber which was of a higher quality than that which he had been able to find.

The upshot was that I ferried batches of 50 pieces of the desired wood to him at intervals and was paid in sets of fittings. I made several sticks for other Scouters who had a need, including the Drill Instructor for the Gibraltar Sea Scouts Pipe Band.

All the sticks were made to order, and made to fit the purchaser.

The legs of the bog-standard MOD-issue stick are

much thicker in cross-section, and it is much heavier. Walking such a stick any distance is likely to cause inflammation of the wrist tendons – a very painful condition.

It was for this reason that a lighter stick was desired, and Ernie Drodge was the king of the racing stick makers.

I sincerely hope that more teams will enter the competition from the Senior Service, but a word of warning to would-be pace-sticking champions, if you're using a lightweight stick, don't practise on an area covered in paving slabs – if one of the feet goes into a crack between slabs, twisting it will inevitably cause the leg to snap.

Such accidents were frequent at Pirbright, and Ernie and I found that repairing such sticks was a nice little earner.

The issue stick only comes in brown, but if one were having a bespoke stick made, there is no reason why one should not specify what colour it should be, or even have it supplied unvarnished and stain it whatever colour one wished.

I made a couple which I stained black and varnished, and gave to two members of the ship's company of HMS Glamorgan when my RN-recognised Sea Scout Group was affiliated to her.

Being long-retired, I'm out of touch with the supply line for racing sticks now, though I still have a couple of sets of fittings, and plan to make a couple more sticks some time. What price a stick finished in camo?

– Andy Stone, Worthing, West Sussex

Licensed tandem taxi service?

THE *Just Jack* cartoon of the hitchhiking sailor (April) reminded me of returning from weekend leave one dark night in 1956.

As I was exiting Portsmouth and Southsea railway station, I became aware of a man astride a white tandem.

It was towing a two-wheeled trailer fixed to a curved bar and swivel under the unoccupied rear saddle.

"Where are you going, mate?" he enquired.

"Excellent," I replied, pointing to my cap tally.

"A shilling," he chirped back.

I accepted, rather than face the one-and-a-half mile walk with my weekend gear.

He took and secured my grip to his trailer, issued me with a pair of clips for my bellbottoms, and ordered "down chin-stays".

I mounted the vacant saddle and away we went.

Everyone could ride a bike, but not necessarily a tandem. We wobbled a bit for the first 50 yards, he shouted instructions over his shoulder, and it was soon OK.

Arriving safely at Whale Island, I paid the fare, tucked my chin-stay away and gave him back his clips.

He told me that in the compartment under the trailer he carried two sets of oilskins and sou'westers, in case of rain.

The point is, can anyone out there recall this tandem and trailer?

Whenever I relate this story at reunions etc, I'm met with friendly jeers of unbelievers.

The usual remark is "you must have been three sheets to the wind", or "did he tow an extra trolley during licensing hours for the buffet and drinks?"

– Tony Hermitage, Winchester, Hants

Fairey and Ton class failures

THE feature (April) about the RN Historic Flight refers to the Sea Fury, built by Fairey.

Surely it was built by Hawker, continuing the name of the biplane fighter of the 1930s.

Fairey built the Firefly (which I flew more than 60 years ago.)

– A G Reeson, York

...CONGRATULATIONS on the report of our Association's book launch (*Ton Class books mark group's anniversary*, April).

Unfortunately there were several errors. The Prince of Wales is Patron, not President, and Rear Admiral John Lippiett is President, not Chairman.

John Soanes is Chairman.
– Brian Mitchell, Ton Class Association member

Thank you.

We stand corrected on all those counts – Man Ed.

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself,

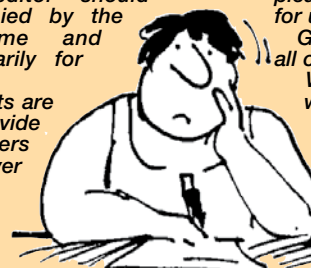
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We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

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A Naval Charity for ALL service and ex-service personnel of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, QARNNS, and their Reserves

| Saturday | Sunday | Monday |
|--|---|---|
| <div>1</div> <div>Saturday May 1:</div> <div>As UK forces carry out reconnaissance missions on the Falklands, HMS Conqueror starts to shadow the cruiser General Belgrano and her escorts.</div> <div>RAF Vulcan puts a crater on Stanley airfield runway in Operation Black Buck 1, having flown from Ascension Island supported by 18 Victor tanker sorties.</div> | <div>2</div> <div>Sunday May 2:</div> <div>Acting on intelligence of an imminent Argentinian maritime pincer attack against the UK carriers, HMS Conqueror sinks the General Belgrano, killing 321.</div> <div>Start of Peruvian diplomatic initiative, which is almost immediately damaged by the sinking.</div> | <div>3</div> <div>Monday May 3:</div> <div>Argentine patrol ship Alférez Sobral fires on British Sea King; ship is badly damaged by Sea Skuas fired by Lynx helicopters.</div> |
| <div>8</div> <div>Saturday May 8:</div> <div>HMS Intrepid leaves Ascension as UN mediation process formally begins.</div> <div></div> | <div>9</div> <div>Sunday May 9:</div> <div>Argentine intelligence trawler Narwhal attacked 60 miles south-east of Stanley; ship later sinks.</div> <div></div> | <div>10</div> <div>Monday May 10:</div> <div>HMS Sheffield sinks under tow from HMS Yarmouth. Type 82 destroyer HMS Bristol and RFA Olna leave Portsmouth; frigates Active, Avenger, Andromeda, Minerva and Penelope leave Devonport.</div> <div>Type 21 frigate HMS Alacrity sinks Argentine naval transport ship Isla de los Estados off Swan Island in Falkland Sound – the only surface action of the war.</div> <div></div> |
| <div>22</div> <div>Saturday May 22:</div> <div>HMS Ardent sinks (below).</div> <div></div> | <div>23</div> <div>Sunday May 23:</div> <div>Type 21 frigate HMS Antelope hit by two UXBs in San Carlos Water. That evening, as two Royal Engineers attempt to defuse the bombs, one bomb explodes, killing Sgt Jim Prescott and fatally damaging the ship.</div> | <div>24</div> <div>Monday May 24:</div> <div>HMS Antelope sinks (above), while Landing Ships Logistic RFAs Sir Galahad and Sir Lancelot are damaged by UXBs in San Carlos Water.</div> |
| <div>29</div> <div>Saturday May 29:</div> <div>Argentine forces surrender at Goose Green.</div> | <div>30</div> <div><div>A Sea Harrier of 801 NAS on combat air patrol over Fanning Head</div></div> | <div>31</div> <div>Monday May 31:</div> <div>K Coy 42 Cdo RM reach Mount Kent, less than ten miles from the outskirts of Stanley.</div> |



Fighting back from injury

THE FATHER of an injured Royal Marine has taken on a fell and rock climbing challenge in aid of the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF).

Mike Quinn, the father of green beret Tom Quinn who was wounded in September last year while serving with 42 Commando in Afghanistan, is determined to reach the summit of the 214 fells listed in *Wainwright's Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells*, and climb the 15 Lakeland rock climbs listed in Ken Wilson's book *Classic Rock*.

And the 66-year-old is determined to complete all this within 12 months from the date of Tom's injury. He is open about how the events around his son's wounding affected him.

He recalls: "It was a normal morning when the receptionist at work came over to my desk and said: 'Mike, there's two gentlemen at reception for you.'

"I looked up thinking it was two of my friends popping into Lakeland to say hello. I remember thinking 'I don't recognise them', then saw the ties that they were wearing – just as the receptionist said: 'They're from the Royal Navy.'

"My heart sank – it must be about Tom.

"The family briefing at Bickleigh before deployment had outlined the process in case of an incident, but it hadn't prepared me for that feeling I had as I walked across the office to meet them.

"I thought the worst and I remember deciding I wasn't going

to look at any of my colleagues in our large open-plan customer services department as I moved through their desks."

He continued: "However, it wasn't too bad. Tom had a clean gunshot wound to the leg and was being brought back to the QE Hospital in Selly Oak.

"Over the next couple of weeks, the support we had from the Casualty Visiting Officer and others was fantastic. The letter Tom received from his CO, Lt Col Ewen Murchison, meant a great deal to him and to all our family.

"I decided I wanted to say 'thank you', and could have sent in a cheque to one of the charities, but decided I could do better than that."

Hence Mike's Fell and Rock Challenge. He's already conquered 168 of the summits and four of the rock climbs.

You can find out the latest information through [Facebook: Fell and Rock Challenge](#), and donations can be made online at www.justgiving.com/fellandrockchallenge.

Mike concludes: "I hope you will consider publishing, not only to help with the fundraising, but to give a non-military father's insight into what happens when a loved one is injured.

"As I've watched Tom recover over the past six months and seen his determination to get back to fitness, I think I'm beginning to understand more what it means to him to be a Royal.

"We are very proud of what he and all his mates have achieved, and it's good to know that – when things went wrong – top-class help was on hand."



TWO Royal Marines who were injured in Afghanistan have paddled 125 miles in their kayak in aid of SSAFA Forces Help and the Royal Marines Association.

The two men are Capt Jon White from 40 Commando who is a triple amputee as the result of an explosive blast in Sangin, and CSgt Lee John Waters, Jon's Troop Sergeant on Herrick 12 who was shot three times while on tour.

The duo took to the water for the Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Marathon that took place over Easter.

They covered 125 miles in 28 hours, arriving at Westminster at 11.20am on Sunday morning after paddling through the night.

Jon said: "The muscle fatigue in my shoulders was beyond belief. It was very tough.

"We powered through and managed to finish it in good time, which was phenomenal.

"So far we have raised £6,000 for the charities and the donations are still coming in."

Jon, from Honiton in Devon, and Lee, from Portsmouth, were the only injured Servicemen taking part in the event this year – and indeed, Jon is the most severely injured Serviceman to take part in the kayak marathon in its 64-year history.

If you would like to show your support for their efforts, please visit www.justgiving.com/jon-bex-dw-ssaffa and www.justgiving.com/jon-bex-dw.



Falklands memorial brightened up at Yeovilton

AT RNAS Yeovilton, a memorial avenue to the sailors and marines from the air station who died in the Falklands Conflict has been reinvigorated with some skilled attention.

As Yeovilton senior rate CPO Mark Howard jogged to the memorial avenue to the Falklands conflict, featuring 12 hornbeam trees and Portland stones, he noticed that the area would benefit from some extra care.

The Falklands Memorial Avenue was created in 1983 to commemorate the 12 people from RNAS Yeovilton who were killed in the Falklands in 1982.

Each tree and memorial stone is dedicated to a sailor or marine who never returned from the South Atlantic. At the heart of the avenue, a central memorial records their names and an epitaph.

Personnel from RNAS Yeovilton and Debut Services (South West) Ltd teamed up with a local stonemason and OCS Grounds Maintenance staff to improve the memorial and its surrounding area.

The idea for the spring-clean came from CPO Howard, a Falklands veteran, who was serving with Commando Helicopter Force's 846 Naval Air Squadron.

He said: "It was a particularly warm day so I walked along the stones, just to read the names of old friends. I noticed a lot of mould and they were in a shabby condition."

So the senior rate determined to have the avenue cleaned before the Falklands 30th commemorations.

CPO Howard added: "It's fabulous what Debut have done. If we're going to have a memorial to the Falklands, I believe we should look after it."

Cdre Paul Chivers, Commanding Officer of RNAS Yeovilton, and himself a Falklands veteran who served in HMS Coventry, inspected the project and admired the team's hard work at a small ceremony that marked the completion of the work.

Local stonemason Ashley Williamson, who had the responsibility of restoring the stone work, commented: "The Portland stone used is very resilient, and has come up well after its cleaning."

The site offers a place of solitude to pause and reflect, and is a lasting tribute to those from the Yeovilton air squadrons who lost their lives during the Falklands Conflict.



● Peter Haines (in green) and fellow participants in the Diana Haines Memorial Rowans Run

Rowans runners at Whale Island

NAVY Command HQ's Peter Haines, himself the son of Naval medics, got in touch with the PTIs on Whale Island to see if they had any plans to organise a mile run.

When he found out nothing was in the pipeline, the civil servant set to work to organise his own in aid of the Rowan's Hospice which had cared for his mum in the last week of her life.

He said: "Unsure of getting it off the ground, but canvassing opinion and finding some interest in people doing it, and plenty willing to sponsor, I set the wheels in motion."

Spurred on by support, he named the run the Diana Haines Memorial Rowans Run, and arranged for a split of 15 per cent of the money raised to go the RNRMC.

He said: "I realised that with my father having been a medical officer in the RN from 1946 to 1975, and my mother having been in the QARNNS in the latter part of her nursing career, that it was very fitting to also support RNRMC."

"On agreeing a date of March 15, I constantly imagined that there would turn out to be a torrential downpour that day. There wasn't, and on a beautiful midday about 13 of us ran, jogged and walked the mile around Whale Island's Upper Lawn with many spectators.

"There was a wonderfully warm community spirit, creating a very enjoyable day, and I somehow managed to push my 47-year-old body to complete the mile in 7 minutes 27 seconds."

Peter has handed over £755 to the Rowans Hospice and £133 to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC). He paid tribute to all his sponsors and to Excellent's PTIs, particularly Martyn Tomkinson, for all their help.



Husband and wife CPOs tackle NY half-marathon

TWO Chief Petty Officers – married couple Andrew and Lynzie Fleming – joined over 15,000 runners to tackle the New York half marathon.

The pair, usually to be found at the Joint Services Signal Unit (Cyprus), are regular competitors in the British Forces Cyprus cross-country league, but as Andrew said: "the New York half-marathon offered a truly memorable experience in iconic surroundings."

He explained: "After a 10km loop inside Central Park, the course went straight through the heart of Times Square before a final five-miles down the Western Highway alongside the Hudson River.

"It was Lynzie's idea to enter the race, vowing to return to New York after an unforgettable run-ashore whilst serving on board HMS Cornwall in 2004."

The couple set themselves the target of beating their colleague Sgt Adam Nelson's full marathon time with their combined half-marathons.

Sgt Nelson pulled off an impressive three hours 22 minutes at the Cyprus marathon in Pafos a week earlier. Andrew pushed himself to the limit, achieving a personal best of 79 minutes 31 seconds.

This gave Lynzie just over two hours to fulfil her part of the challenge. However she had problems even before she began the run proper – from the sound of the pistol, it took Lynzie 30 minutes to even cross the starting line.

But she swiftly gathered speed, and clinched the narrow challenge win by 108 seconds.

The two chose Great Ormond Street as their charity, with fundraising already at the £750 mark.

● CPOs Andrew (left) and Lynzie (right) Fleming take on the New York half marathon



Goodwood gathering of planes and cars

IF YOU'RE at all interested in planes or classic cars, head down to Goodwood on June 4 for Planes, Games and Automobiles, with all donations from the day going to support the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund.

Organiser CPO(AET) Baz Firth of Yeovilton is keen to get as many people as possible to the event, which will feature a host of supercars and driving star-guests.

He said: "This is an excellent opportunity for the public to get out in some really stunning and rare cars, whilst making a donation to charity."

"The Dream Ride event we ran at the NEC proved very successful, and we have raised over £37,000 for children's charities."

The Goodwood day offers 40 cars with 30-minute track sessions as either driver of your own car or passenger in a sportscar, a ten-mile 'dream ride' through the Sussex countryside in a supercar, and a static car display which is drawing in car clubs from across the country – the best in show competition will be judged by the most discerning audience, the children...

In addition there will be helicopter rides, craft stalls and a 1950s street party to bring the festival spirit to life, and a host of events to keep the children amused, with games and treasure hunts.

To find out more, contact Baz on bazfirth@talktalk.net.

Baz is the South-West rep for the Sporting Bears Motoring Club, and is keen to generate further interest in the Club as well as organising events for members and the public.

● WRNS personnel with the Queen Mother in 1948



Wrens' book takes flight

THE long-anticipated celebratory book about the WRNS Benevolent Trust will be launched at a meeting attended by the charity's patron, the Princess Royal, later this month.

The book, *70 Years of Trust*, looks back over the charity's history and contains dozens of rare photographs of former Wrens at work and at play.

Many were donated by its 60,000 current members, following appeals in newsletters and other media, including *Navy News*.

The WRNS BT was set up in 1942 to help the thousands of volunteers who were enlisting in the WRNS.

With so many Wrens serving

their country with distinction at home and abroad, and in some cases losing their lives, it was clear that a charity would be needed to support them.

Over the past 70 years, the charity has helped more than 12,000 former Wrens in the UK and abroad and its work continues today.

In 2011 it helped support more than 400 women and distributed a total of £350,000 in grants.

"All ex-Wrens are members, irrespective of their age or position," said Sarah Ayton, the Trust's General Secretary.

"Some of the ladies we assist served during the war, but we also help former Wrens as young as in their 30s, and lots in between."

The 70th anniversary

commemorative book will be launched at the Trust's Annual General Meeting in London, in the presence of the charity's Patron, the Princess Royal.

All monies raised from the sale will go to the charity. The book costs £12, plus £3 postage and packing, and can be ordered via the WRNS BT website: www.wrnsbt.org.uk.

Those without web connectivity can fill in an order form. These will be obtainable from many museums and organisations, or from the charity's headquarters at WRNS BT, 311, Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth PO2 8RN, telephone 023 92 655301.

Books can be ordered any time but won't be despatched until May 23.

FAA history celebrated at Dartmouth

THE 'golden thread' of Fleet Air Arm history was celebrated when a fund-raising Taranto dinner in Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, made £3,500 for the Fly Navy Heritage Trust.

More than 120 current pilots, observers, air traffic controllers and air engineers from across the Service joined Fleet Air Arm officer cadets for a celebration of the air wing's finest hour.

The attack on the Italian Fleet in harbour in November 1940 is regarded as a stunning demonstration of naval air power – it hampered Fascist ambitions in the Mediterranean and served as the blueprint for the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor 13 months later.

Whereas the Surface Fleet celebrates Trafalgar Night each year on October 21, aviators enjoy their big evening on November 11 – which typically involves a re-enactment of the attack complete with mini replica Swordfish.

Proceeds from that event at the spiritual home of the Royal Navy's officer corps have now been counted and handed over to the trust in the form of a cheque presented to Capt Mike Nixon, Chief Executive Officer of the Fly Navy Heritage Trust, by Cdre Simon Williams, Commodore Britannia Royal Naval College.

The trust's main goal is to keep the veteran aircraft of the RN Historic Flight at RNAS Yeovilton in working order so the Swordfish, Sea Furies and sole Sea Hawk

can appear at air shows across the land and uphold the memories of 6,500-plus naval aircrew who've died since sailors first took to the skies more than a century ago.

It also supports the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church of St Bartholomew and its cemetery, the FAA Museum, and generally champions the deeds of the vital branch of the Navy whenever and wherever it can.

The fund-raising event at Dartmouth was organised by Lt Richard Bartram, BRNC's Flight Training Officer.

"I decided that there could be no better way to instil the Fleet Air Arm tribal spirit into the Officer Cadets at BRNC than to give them the opportunity to mark the most important historical date in its calendar amongst the very officers they one day aspire to be like," he explained.

"To include Admiral Sir Michael Layard speaking about the Fleet Air Arm's past glories at Taranto proved to be a perfect scene-setter for the Chief of Staff (Aviation), Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham, to then give a rousing speech on its present operations and future."

Admiral Sir Michael Layard is a former FAA fighter pilot and also a trustee of the trust, passionate about the work it does.

"I try hard to ensure that the officer cadets at BRNC do not lose sight of the Fleet Air Arm heritage," Lt Bartram added, "and so support of the FNHT is a logical step to take."

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Sergeant retires after 42 years

SERGEANT Adrian Rookes brought an illustrious 42-year career with the MOD Police to a close when he handed his warrant card to his successor at RN Air Station Yeovilton, watched by his wife Rowena and close friends and colleagues.

He had become one of the longest serving MOD officers still on the force.

Adrian (pictured above) joined the Admiralty Constabulary in April 1971 – an organisation which could trace its Naval roots back to 1686, before its amalgamation with the Army Department Constabulary and the Air Force Department Constabulary to form the MOD Police Force in October 1971.

His first posting was at Portland Naval Base, since when he has also served at Gosport and Corsham before joining Yeovilton in 2004 as the Senior Police Officer of the station, where he was responsible for up to 12 officers, rising to more than 25 for the annual Air Day.

Sgt Mark Yates, Adrian's successor, said: "We're into a busy time with the arrival of new Wildcat helicopters and the Army coming in."

"This will present its own unique set of problems. As the base increases as a whole it's going to get busy."



Saving the best till last

A ROYAL Fleet Auxiliary Chief Petty Officer has been commended for his role in training as he retires from the Service after a career spanning four decades.

CPO Jerry Collings (above) joined the RFA in 1977 and has spent the last seven years of his career at HMS Raleigh where he played a pivotal role in designing and implementing a new entry course for RFA deckhands.

And this really was built from scratch – not only did Jerry have to produce course documentation, but he also had to identify classrooms and training resources, though he has described the job as being the highlight of his career.

To date 140 new recruits have taken the seven-month course, which includes training in the tricky business of replenishing at sea.

CPO Collings's commendation, awarded by the CO of HMS Raleigh, Capt Steve Murdoch, stated: "He has been an excellent role model and superb ambassador for the RFA within the wider defence community, and as he nears completion of an outstanding career he can be immensely proud of his achievements at HMS Raleigh and throughout his time in the RFA."

Alice is crowned top young RM musician

THESE six youthful Royal Marines Musicians are the best and the brightest in the Naval Service's world-famous band.

From more than 40 initial entrants in the Young Musician of the Year Competition back in January, numbers were whittled down to the sextet pictured right – Musicians Ruben Hanna, Sophie Whitter, Alice Hudson, Eleanor Moys, Sam Martin and Katherine Beard – in the final at HMS Collingwood in Fareham.

They were judged on musical ability and performance style, playing on a range of instruments including the flute, clarinet, French horn and piano.

The judges on the night were Lt Col Nick Grace, Principal Director of Music Royal Marines, Lt Col Chris Davis (retired), the former Principal Director of Music, and world-famous trumpet player Derek Watkins, who has played the trumpet on the soundtracks to all 22 Eon James Bond movies.

The winner was Musn Alice Hudson, who gave an unbeatable performance on the violin.

She will be passing out after three years' training in August to join one of the five Royal Marines Bands, but before that she'll receive a silver medal from the Worshipful Company of



● From left: Musicians Ruben Hanna, Sophie Whitter, winner Alice Hudson, Eleanor Moys, Sam Martin and Katherine Beard

Musicians in London, marking her success in the competition.

After the prize giving ceremony the Royal Marines School of Music Big Band took to the stage, and Mr Watkins couldn't resist giving the audience a stunning

trumpet performance which marked the end to a night packed with entertainment.

Maj Jason Burcham, Director of Music (Training) at the RM School of Music, said: "This really was a night to remember."

Helping Marines – 31 years on



WARRANT Officer 2 Tony Veale, C/Sgt Nige Holmes and C/Sgt Geoff Power (left) joined the Royal Marines together in 268 Troop on August 4 1980.

They all saw action in the Falklands and a clutch of theatres since then.

They are all still serving, nearly 32 years later, and all in the same line of work – rehabilitation and Royal Marines recovery roles.

WO2 Veale and C/Sgt Holmes are with Hasler Company and C/Sgt Power with Termoli Troop, 40 Cdo, imparting their experience and knowledge to support bootnecks on the 'Recovery Pathway'.

Museum gets heirloom

AN heirloom from a leading Royal Marine has been presented to the Corps' museum by his Naval officer son.

Cdr Terry Tyack, Executive Officer at RN Air Station Yeovilton, presented his father's Regimental Sergeant Major's cane to the Royal Marines Museum at a ceremony in Somerset.

On hand to receive the heirloom was the present Corps RSM, WO1 (RSM) Ally McGill, who said: "It's important we safeguard our traditions and this is a good way to preserve the legacy."

Roger Tyack served as RSM in three jobs – Fleet RSM at Royal Marines Eastney, 45 Commando Royal Marines at Arbroath in Scotland and the Depot Royal Marines at Deal in Kent.

He went on after his time in the Corps to be a member of the Queen's Body Guard of the Yeomen of the Guard.

In addition to the RSM's cane Cdr Tyack handed over a painting of his father with the Drum Major from Deal at the time, believed to be Alfie Lambing.

The painting had previously hung in the Sergeants Mess at Royal Marines Deal for many years and had been bestowed to the Tyack family when the barracks closed.

George Forster, a former Corps RSM himself, was on hand to update the RSM register,



● Cdr Terry Tyack (left) hands his father's Regimental Sergeant Major's cane over to WO1 (RSM) Ally McGill RM

Picture: LA(Phot) Al Macleod

which records the lineage of over 600 names since 1898 that have held similar appointments and functions, with up to 250 since World War two when the rank was formalised.

RSM (WO1) Roger Tyack's

cane and the painting were then due to be formally handed over to the Royal Marines Museum in Southsea, Portsmouth, by RSM McGill, who will look into the possibility of a unique presentation.



Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

Helen keeps a promise

A STAR of Britain's longest-running children's programme hopped into the back of a Royal Navy Sea King to give young TV viewers an insight into the world of military search and rescue.

Blue Peter presenter Helen Skelton (above) joined the rescuers of 771 Naval Air Squadron in Culdrose for a weekend – exactly as promised last autumn.

The Ace of Clubs helped the show launch their new studios at Salford's Media City in September, breaking off from a long-range training exercise to deliver the 28-year-old presenter in style.

That brief glimpse into the world of the red-and-grey Sea Kings prompted the *Blue Peter* team to produce a more detailed feature on the work of search and rescue helicopters.

So six months on Helen and a camera crew travelled to Cornwall, with the presenter taking on the role of an aircrewman – no problem to someone who has paddled a kayak the 2,000-mile-length of the Amazon, tightrope-walked across Battersea Power Station and cycled and skied to the South Pole.

Helen was taught the basics of flying and navigation, and the instructors had enough confidence in Helen to take her out on a training mission.

The four-man crew and Helen were scrambled to airlift a 'casualty' who had been pulled out of the water by the RNLI.

When the team arrived Helen was winched on to the lifeboat where she recovered the casualty and helped the crew rescue the individual by winching him up.

"Helen was a great student and a fast learner," said Observer Lt Cdr Rob 'Smoke' Suckling.

"She took the debrief points on board from the first day and I was happy for her to be supervised carrying out a boat winch on day two."

"I think she got a real insight into the technical aspects of the winchman's job and experienced a little of it first-hand."

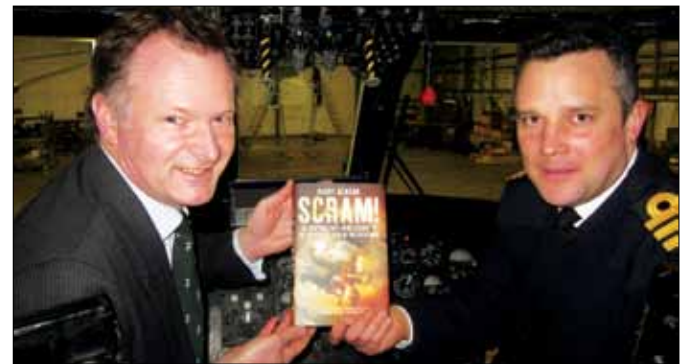
Top prize for fledgling flyer

A NAVAL training squadron welcomed back one of its alumni to present him with a highly-prized award.

S/Lt Adam Vines was at Yeovilton to collect the Nigel Pitcher Memorial Trophy, donated by Babcock in memory of a respected flying tutor who died in 2010 and presented by his widow Sue.

S/Lt Vines won the trophy by achieving the most outstanding performances during flying grading with 727 NAS, when a pilot's potential is assessed before elementary training at RAF Barkston Heath.

In S/Lt Vines' case, he has spent time on exchange with the Army's Apache force, including a stint with HMS Ocean off Libya, and he will now continue his flying training at the Defence Helicopter Training School at RAF Shawbury.



● Lt Harry Benson RN (rtd) presents a copy of his book *Scram* to Cdr Ric Fox at Yeovilton

Pilot reflects on Falklands

FORMER Naval aviator Lt Harry Benson was reunited with fellow Falklands Conflict veteran Cdr Ric Fox at Yeovilton when he presented the officer with a copy of his recently-published book *Scram*.

The book is about the experiences of Junglie aircrew who risked their lives during fighting in the South Atlantic 30 years ago – Harry was a 21-year-old RN commando helicopter pilot fresh out of training in 1982 – one of the youngest to serve in the Falklands.

Cdr Fox, of 848 NAS, said: "Harry's book is an excellent

collection of factual accounts from my fellow Junglies who took part in the Falklands war.

"Whilst 30 years ago have now passed my memories from the Falklands war are still sharp, and this book is a cracking read that will no doubt stir emotions for many as it has for me."

During Harry's visit, Cdr Jim Newton, CO of 845 NAS and himself an author (*Armed Action*) tells of his tank-busting experiences in Iraq) took time out to discuss his experiences in Afghanistan and to show him around a Sea King helicopter.



Tyne mark Michael's centenary

THE birthday boy may have requested no fuss, but it's not every day an active member of your branch reaches the age of 100.

So shipmates at Tyne decided to mark the occasion in appropriate fashion at their AGM at the end of March, four days before S/M Michael Logan (above) became a centenarian.

The effort was led by the ladies of the branch, who decided to ignore Michael's statement that "I might be 100 but it is just another day to me" and provide some goodies.

Some 27 shipmates attended the meeting, and numbers were augmented at the conclusion of business by representatives of the Calliope Association and other ex-Service groups.

Tyne chairman S/M Tug Wilson presented S/M Michael with a branch plaque and numerous cards of congratulations, and when they spliced the mainbrace the toast was – naturally – S/M Michael Logan, who returned the compliment by proposing a toast to the branch. And then the celebrations began...

S/M Michael was a member of the former RNVR establishment HMS Calliope – later RNR – from June 1931 until July 1967.

His service included HM ships Rodney, Revenge, Westminster, Cardiff, Hornet and Coastal Forces Mobile Unit 1.

Starting in the Seamen's Branch, S/M Michael decided to try his hand as a mechanic in 1934 and ended up a CPO MM.

South Atlantic veterans meet

MEMBERS of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Merchant Navy from the South-West who took part in the Falklands campaign will be gathering in Plymouth next month to mark the 30th anniversary of the conflict.

The date set is June 14, and for more details of the programme you should contact Mark Richardson on manfy78@hotmail.co.uk or call 01752 516948.

Silver service

BUXTON and High Peak branch are preparing to celebrate their 25th anniversary this month.

Plans include a Sea Sunday service at Buxton Methodist Church at 1100 on May 13, where they will be joined by the local Sea Cadet unit.

An anniversary lunch will then take place at the Alison Park Hotel in Buxton at 1300.

Any local supporters or ex-shipmates who would like to attend should contact S/M Trevor Johnson at trevorstella@johnson@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 01298 212321.

New Suez memorial dedicated

A REFURBISHED Suez Veterans Association memorial has been dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

The original memorial, which features a pyramid surrounded by sand with blue glass chippings to represent the canal, was dedicated in 2004, but has required considerable maintenance to keep it looking smart – particularly to counter the effects of rabbits

burrowing into the ground nearby.

Much of that maintenance has been carried out by members of the association, but with age taking its toll it was decided to refurbish the memorial with a low-maintenance design.

The re-dedication took place at the end of March, including a simple service and presentations to a number of people involved in the project, which commemorates those who died in the Canal Zone.

More than 40 standard bearers joined veterans on parade, watched by some 500 onlookers, with Arboretum Chief Executive Cdr Charles Bagot-Jewitt taking the salute.

A presentation was made to Association member S/M Brian Watts, who co-ordinated the refurbishment, later that day at a gala dinner at the Best Western hotel in Kegworth where some 80 SVA members had stayed for their spring reunion weekend.

Shrewsbury flag up standard initiative

SHREWSBURY branch believes it has broken new ground by appointing a member of the Sea Cadet Corps as their new standard bearer.

The branch formally enrolled Cdt Victoria Kilbane at a ceremony held at the end of March.

Victoria received her certificate as standard bearer from Shrewsbury chairman S/M John Turner at a branch meeting, which was also attended by PO(SCC) Kevin Hoyles from Telford, Victoria's unit.

Victoria is, as far as the branch is aware, the first member of the Sea Cadet Corps to perform the duties of a standard bearer for a RNA branch.

Shipmates at Shrewsbury are looking forward to Victoria performing her duties on their behalf, attending the many functions required, proudly displaying the Shrewsbury RNA standard.

Previous standard bearer S/M Jim Hale has had to step down from the post due to ill health, but has taken a leading role in mentoring his successor.



● Sea Cadet Victoria Kilbane with retiring Shrewsbury branch standard bearer Jim Hale (centre) and PO(SCC) Kevin Hoyles

Jim paraded the standard at numerous functions throughout the Midlands and, occasionally, further afield for a number of years.

During this time he has been a credit to the RNA as an organisation and to the Shrewsbury branch in particular, his shipmates said.

And while they may miss him in his standard-bearer role, shipmates will continue to enjoy his company as an active member of the branch.

Submarine artefacts restored

YEARS of grime and neglect were put right by Rolls-Royce apprentices in a community project which strengthened the link between the iconic firm and Royal Navy submariners.

The dilapidated artefacts were from World War 2 submarine HMS Tactician, and were discovered by Jack Winstanley, a member of Derbyshire Submariners, at a bankruptcy sale in the late 1990s.

The items – the badge plaque and ship's bell – became branch assets, but were put in storage when members failed to find a suitable home for them.

Since leaving their original home, they had been on display in a miners' welfare club and were then stored in a garage, swathed in bubblewrap and plastic bags.

When the submariners obtained them the badge plaque was found to have woodworm, and the bell was filthy and its plinth had seen better days.

Rolls-Royce offered to restore the items at their Raynesway site, replacing the original wood with British oak and cleaning up both badge and bell.



● S/Ms Terry Hall and Kevin Lawson of Derbyshire Submariners with the restored artefacts from HMS Tactician, courtesy Rolls-Royce
Picture: William Rose (Rolls-Royce)

Tactician project leader S/M Terry Hall and colleague S/M Kevin Lawson, who worked for Rolls-Royce for 30 years, formally accepted the artefacts, with Terry commenting: "What a wonderful

job the apprentices and staff have achieved cleaning 70 years of grime."

But that is not the end of the story, as a new home has finally been found for the badge and bell.

They are due to be formally presented to Alfreton Town Council – described by Terry as 'their spiritual home' – at the same time as the Derbyshire Submariners celebrate the tenth anniversary of the granting of the Freedom of the City of Derby to the Submarine Service.

The plaque and bell will be handed to Cllr Marlene Bennett, the Mayor of Alfreton, the town which raised money for HMS Tactician during Warship Week in 1942.

After a couple of patrols in Northern Europe the boat patrolled extensively in the Mediterranean and Far East.

She continued to serve into the Cold War era, finally being scrapped in 1963.

S/M Terry added that he had heard at a submarine reunion that Tactician may have been the first submarine to circumnavigate the world, as she left the UK to serve in the Far East but returned via the Panama Canal after forming the Fourth Submarine Squadron in Australia after the war – does anyone have any thoughts on that?

Tavistock RMA visits Yeovilton

A GROUP from Tavistock branch of the RMA have paid a visit to Yeovilton Air Station, where they were hosted by Base Warrant Officer WO1 Steve Uzzell.

It was a good opportunity for the veterans to ask questions and chat to serving Royal Marines.

"They're really pleased to be here – it's not often we get to host the old boys," said WO1 Jamie Heywood, who also serves at Yeovilton.

One of the visitors was Tom Cadwallader who, at 91, was delighted with the RMA's invitation to the airfield.

Tom served as a Marine on board destroyers during World War 2 and his father served as a Marine before him, completing 28 years during the Boer War and World War 1.

Sgt Ian Macdonald, a member of the Tavistock branch, was on hand to show the veterans around.

After lunch with the Yeovilton mess president and senior rate Royal Marines the veterans were entertained in the Falklands Bar of the WO and SRs mess.

Candidates sought for sailing camp

THE annual International Maritime Confederation (IMC) Sailing Camp is to be held in naval base of Sint-Kruis in Bruges, Belgium, from July 9-19.

The RNA is looking for youngsters between the ages of 14 and 19 who might be interested in joining the camp – they need not be a Sea Cadet, just a shipmate's grandson or granddaughter.

The subsidised cost will be 140 Euros (full cost is 390 Euros), with the candidate having to meet the cost of travel in full.

Contact Andy or Paul at RNA HQ (tel 023 9272 3747 or email admin@royalnavalassoc.com) if you would like more details, or can suggest a possible candidate.

Hood remembered

THE annual HMS Hood commemoration service will take place at the church of St John the Baptist in Boldre, in the New Forest, at 1100 on Sunday May 20.

Guest speaker this year will be Rev Scott Brown, Chaplain of the Fleet.

Bandies in concert

NORWICH branch have organised a concert by the Royal Marines Band Portsmouth on Sunday June 17 at the city's Theatre Royal.

The concert, in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and supporting Royal Naval charities, starts at 1930.

For details see www.theatreroyalnorwich.co.uk

SODS opera staged

THE Kings Theatre in Southsea is to host a Naval Revue – or 'a night at the SODS Opera' – on July 29.

Featuring Shep Woolley and George Saunders, the show – which starts at 1930 – is raising funds for the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust and SAMA 82.

For details see www.kings-southsea.com



● MEMBERS of Caerphilly branch gather at the Goodrich Hotel in the town to celebrate their 21st anniversary. Pictured are (back row, from left): Cliff Rose, Bill Carter, chairman and secretary Dave Richards, vice chairman Terry Cheasty and Norman Fookes; front, from left, Hadyn Perrott, Sid Jones (partially hidden) and right at the front, treasurer Ken Taylor



Falklands commanders gather

A SCHEME born in a pub in Exeter more than a year ago resulted in a memorable reunion of Falklands veterans in Berkshire last month.

The idea was simple: to bring together the Commanding Officers of all Service units, the Merchant Fleet, members of Margaret Thatcher's Cabinet and a few other selected guests for one last dinner *en masse* before nature takes its toll.

The commemorative Falklands 30 Command Dinner, held at Pangbourne College, was proposed and organised by Gary Rimay-Muranyi, who set himself the task of tracking and tracing people, though he said it was a privilege to see the strong bonds that remain between veterans after three decades as he followed up contacts.

Entertainment for the day was organised with the help of the Commandant General Royal Marines providing a 48-piece marching band and seven-man fanfare team from Portsmouth – the Royal Band.

On the big day the College drive was lined by Sea and Royal Marines Cadets from five different units: Henley-on-Thames, Newbury, Reading, Twickenham and Woking.

Guests were greeted by two Welsh Guards and two Royal Marines Colour Sergeants, before being ushered into a pre-dinner reception, which featured the first public tasting and launch of Falkland Islands Ale, a new beer produce by Britain's oldest brewer



● Fleet CPO Mick Fellows and CPO Graham 'Piggy' Trotter, RN bomb disposal experts who collectively defused and disposed of hundreds of bombs and pieces of Argentine ordnance

Shepherd Neame with all profits going to the South Atlantic Medal Association and the Falklands Veterans Foundation.

On the Parade Ground the band opened with the fanfare *Operation Corporate*, written as a memorial to the Falklands Conflict.

After a formal group photograph inside the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel, guests moved on to their tables.

Before dinner, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, Mess President for the night, invited C/Sgt Steve Newland to light a solitary candle to represent Absent Friends.

The menu was designed to reflect the Falklands, albeit not always too obviously.

The starter was a king prawn and nori seafood salad, the prawns representing the krill that is the staple of much Falklands fauna, the nori represented the kelp that surrounds the islands.

The main course had to be lamb, recognising the Falkland Islands' historic link with sheep, but for many the *pièce de résistance* was undoubtedly the dessert.

Described on the menu simply as apple tart with cider sorbet, on its presentation it caused quite a stir – each rectangular plate had a map of the Falkland Islands made in chocolate alongside an individual apple pie (pictured left), – a culinary effort which took chefs three days to prepare.

A 22-piece Royal Marines orchestra played their finales or 'extras' – usually only one piece is played, but because of the nature of the evening, it was felt that something more was needed.

The extras started with a four-way *Post Horn Gallop* challenge which built excitement as each musician aimed to go faster and higher than the previous one.

To finish, the orchestra paid respect to some of the units

represented in the room, playing a medley that featured 19 of the Regimental Marches of those attending – and on Admiral Band's instructions, if a march was played that represented one's Regiment or Unit, guests were to stand up and be counted.

The evening continued with a speech by Prof Julian Lindley-French, followed by the presentation of one of the Governor's flags, obtained by Lt Col Ewen Southby-Tailyour RM as a souvenir of his time in the islands in the late 1970s.

When Governor Rex Hunt was deported by the Argentines, the outraged officer offered the flag to him at RAF Brize Norton, to be told "I don't want it, because I want you to put it back where it bloody well belongs."

Ewen then passed it to Maj Mike Norman RM, the CO of Naval Party 8901, who had defended the Governor's House in Stanley as the invaders arrived.

On his return to the UK, Mike was reappointed as OC of newly-formed J Coy, 42 Cdo, and found himself immediately heading south again to retake the islands.

The flag was carried during all of 42 Cdo's actions and Mike Norman and his 'boys' had the pleasure of re-hoisting it at the Governor's House after the Argentine surrender.



The flag then disappeared briefly, to re-emerge in the Royal Marines Museum, Eastney, where it has been looked after ever since.

Last year, through valiant efforts by several individuals, it was agreed that the flag should be returned to the Falklands for good.

Ewen formally handed over the flag to Miss Sukey Cameron, the Falkland Islands UK Representative at the dinner

(pictured above).

As *Navy News* went to press the flag was due to be passed to Stanley Museum for safekeeping, although in the longer term it is hoped that it will be laid up in the Cathedral at Stanley.

The flag was due to head south when Lt Cdr Roger Morgan (who travelled the 16,000 mile round trip to be at the Dinner) returns to the Falklands.

Pictures: Ex-CPO(Phot) Paul McCabe, Falklands 30 Command Dinner official photographer



£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our March edition (right) was HMS Scourge, which became HNLMS Evertsen.

Mr Wallace, of Gainsborough, wins the £50 prize for providing the correct answer.

This month's mystery ship, above, was completed in 1954 as a cargo liner, originally scheduled for transatlantic grain trade.

But within three years she had been chartered by the Admiralty and shortly after entered service as a Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

In the late 1950s she underwent the first stage of her conversion to a Stores Issuing Ship and took on her second RFA name.

She was sent to Scotland for scrapping in the mid-1970s.

(1) What was her **first** name in the RFA, and (2) under what name did she end her RFA career?

Complete the coupon and send



it to Mystery Picture, *Navy News*, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is June 15 2012. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our July edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

Convoys in spotlight

A SPECIAL week of events on the theme of Russian Convoys is to be staged this month by the Russian Arctic Convoy Museum in Aultbea, Wester Ross, Scotland.

'World War 2 and the Arctic Convoys Week' will run from May 7-12, and will include the possibility of getting your hands on a German Enigma code machine, brought by keynote speaker Dr Mark Baldwin, a world-

renowned expert on code-breaking.

Other events will include exhibitions, talks, a 1940s-style American dance, a guided walk and a 1940s film night.

The events will be staged in and around Aultbea, and though many are free some require the purchase of tickets.

For more details see www.russianarcticconvoymuseum.co.uk

Treasure ship went down guns blazing

SEVENTY years ago this month a Royal Navy cruiser was pounded to a standstill by German naval forces while escorting a westbound convoy through the Arctic Ocean.

The British cruiser was carrying a cargo as valuable as that of any merchantman plying the cold northern seas – more than 450 gold bars, payment by the Russian government for American equipment and supplies.

On the afternoon of April 30 Edinburgh was hit by two torpedoes fired by U-456, virtually crippling the ship.

She attempted to limp back to Russia, helped by escorts HM ships Forester and Foresight and a cluster of minesweepers, but the group was attacked by German destroyers on May 2.

Some of Edinburgh's main guns could still fire under local control, and through skill and experience the cruiser's shells smashed into German warship Shoemann, which had to be abandoned and later sank.

The German ships were beaten

off, but all three RN warships sustained damage, with Edinburgh being struck by another torpedo.

The structural damage sustained was so severe that she was likely to crumple and sink at any moment, so the ship's company were taken off by minesweepers and Foresight dealt the *coup de grâce*.

Peter Gunney's late father served in HMS Edinburgh, and he has researched his father's career and the story of the cruiser.

For a more detailed account of the sinking of HMS Edinburgh visit www.navynews.co.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=6&t=54891&sid=7a34ab94b43541

Gone to the dogs

STOCKBRIDGE and Deepcar branch has gone to the dogs.

Members and friends attended a greyhound meeting at Owlerton Stadium in Sheffield.

Following an excellent meal, some serious betting took place, with members doing very nicely from some canny place wagers.

Boy Seamen memorial dedicated in cathedral

A CAMPAIGN driven by a former Royal Navy Boy Seaman to honour those teenagers who gave their lives in World War 2 has come to fruition with the dedication of a memorial plaque in Portsmouth.

Jim Reed, who joined HMS St Vincent in 1937 at the age of 15, began a fundraising and awareness campaign a year ago when he decided that the 534 Boy Seamen aged 16 and 17 who died in 80 warships during the war deserved recognition.

In mid-March Jim and the project team's dream came true when more than 300 people, including a number of fellow boy seamen, joined the team at Portsmouth's Anglican Cathedral for a service and dedication ceremony, carried out by the Dean, the Very Rev David Brindley.

Also attending were a number of standards from RNA branches, representatives of ship associations connected to boy seamen, serving members of the Royal Navy and memorial sculptor Robyn Golden-Hann.

Following the event, Jim said: "It has been a great honour and privilege to meet so many shipmates, veterans and members of the public personally and hear their very moving experiences."

"This worthy memorial is from all of us."

"We are as one and everyone has played an equal part in being able to honour our Boy Seamen and pay their respects."

Jim also thanked those who made donations to the fund – which has now closed – and those



● Jim Reed contemplates the newly-dedicated memorial to RN Boy Seamen at Portsmouth Anglican Cathedral

firms who provided services at reduced rates.

Books of remembrance have also been produced, and Jim has set his sights on adding further groups of young Servicemen to the roll of honour.

Following research into the deaths, over the coming months Jim hopes to add Royal Marines Boy Buglers aged 16 and 17, and NAAFI Boys of the same age.

"We will aim to complete these additions and have them entered into the Books of Remembrance by Remembrance Sunday this year," said Jim.

"We will also attend the cathedral's service and lay a wreath from us all."

MYSTERY PICTURE 207

Name

Address

My answers (1)

(2)

Home to duty stays at 3 miles

PLANNED changes to the Home to Duty (HDT) (Public) Travel allowance have been halted.

The HDT threshold for personal contribution was due to increase in April this year from three to six miles, and in April 2013 due to go up again to nine miles.

However it has been deemed that HDT is an important element of the allowance package as Service personnel have very little choice in where they serve, and if they live in public accommodation, where they live.

For this reason, after some investigation, it was decided that the HDT (Public) personal contribution would remain at 89p per day, and will not increase. Further detail can be found in DIN and Galaxy.



● Lt Gareth Plunkett

Gareth is a Fellow

LT Gareth Plunkett has been awarded the Naval Review Fellowship Award 2012.

The award, sponsored by Ultra Electronics, funds outstanding junior officers in the Royal Navy, allowing them a six-week secondment to the Royal Australian Navy for study.

Lt Plunkett will be working on a report entitled *Applicability of a Commando Helicopter Force to the Royal Australian Navy*.

In addition, at the presentation by Rear Admiral Mark Anderson, Lt Plunkett was given a Dory Compass "to find his way home" from Australia.

Pension: have your say

HOW much do you know about the Future Armed Forces Pension Scheme? Do you understand how the changes might affect you?

Now is your chance to voice your opinion, and make a difference to what happens next.

Check your email for a link to the online survey where you can voice your opinion.

Otherwise visit the RN IC Hub on the intranet for more information.

Watch out for TwoSix

THE latest edition of *TwoSix.tv* features the First Sea Lord's annual message, redundancy and resettlement information, and a Paralympics hopeful.

The DVD has been aligned with the Personnel Support Brief to provide an enhanced package for sharing information.

If you want to get your message out through these pages or the *TwoSix.tv* DVD, please contact:

■ Pauline Aquilina: 9621 85984

■ WO1 Russ Billings: 93832 5081

Pauline Aquilina is also the first point of contact for the RN Facebook site.



Loggies all over the world



Drafty's corner

Fancy something different? There's a plethora of Logistics positions out there beyond the gates of the Naval bases of Plymouth, Portsmouth and Faslane.

No, it's not Northwood or Yeovil, or even Culdrose, but a bit further afield than that! The Royal Navy Logistics Branch currently employs ratings in a vast array of jobs all over the world.

Loan Foreign Service (LFS) is distinct from shorter (six to nine month) overseas Operational Tours (Op Tours).

LFS provides opportunities for service in two- to three-year length assignments abroad, the majority of which can be accompanied by spouses and dependents.

LFS positions range from the more traditional positions in the NATO maritime command headquarters in Naples and the Allied HQ (SHAPE) in Belgium to new and varied posts in locations such as Pakistan and Jamaica. There are currently 90 LFS logistics positions in every rate and sub-specialisation.

Logistics ratings are employed in a mixture of NATO and attaché jobs in Norway, America, Portugal, Holland, Gibraltar, Russia, Estonia, Qatar, Kuwait, Ethiopia, Chile, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Dubai and Germany – certainly a very wide and varied choice of jobs available for those that volunteer to serve on LFS.

Most LFS positions are for a duration of three years and it is an excellent opportunity for family stability whilst enhancing and broadening your portfolio.

It is also a great life experience to spend three years working and residing in a foreign country, immersing in a different culture and an opportunity that few people will be fortunate enough to receive.

If you have never experienced an LFS before then this may be the time to take the plunge.

Picture sitting on the balcony of your married quarter in Gibraltar, relaxing after a day in the office or on a weekend with the family, looking at your 180° sea-view of Europe and North Africa across the straits, with the sun shining on an average of 300 days a year!

The CPOWTR post in the Defence Section Jamaica is an excellent opportunity for someone



● Roles for logisticians exist across the world, from Gibraltar (pictured) to Naples, Pakistan and Jamaica

who wants that extra challenge and it is something completely different.

The post involves engagement with the Overseas Territories and current incumbent, Chief Petty Officer (Writer) Steve Freeman, has visited a host of places including the Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, USA and more.

Working directly for a Lt Col (Defence Attaché) in the British High Commission, the job is hugely diverse and although it can be hectic at times it is also hugely rewarding.

With friendly locals and stunning scenery, a three-year post as the Assistant Defence Attaché in Jamaica would certainly be the highlight of any RN career.

You must be a volunteer to be assigned to a LFS position and are subject to United Kingdom Service regulations including being administered and receiving pay and allowances in the usual way (including continuing to be subject to United Kingdom income tax).

Before applying for LFS, you should discuss thoroughly with your Career Manager and consider the respective TACOS applicable to the country and the post to which you wish to apply.

In some less benign locations you should pay particular attention to any identified inherent health and safety risks for the country and whether such risks would make Service in that country unsuitable for your dependants.

Any overseas location can provide both opportunity and challenges for your dependants, including immersion in local culture and customs, differing climatic conditions, access to shops and local facilities (including recreation) but also isolation from UK Armed Forces welfare and community facilities, friends and relatives etc.

Your application requires your chain of command to confirm

your suitability for Loan Service, including family considerations.

All LFS selections are subject to clearance by the Host Nation and, most importantly, you should not commit to any changes in circumstance (financial, schooling, dependants employment etc), until cleared and formally assigned.

In some LFS posts there is a requirement to undertake language training (details are contained in Job Specifications and your Career Manager will let you know).

In such cases you will be required to attend a course at the Defence School of Languages, Beaconsfield or at another language school.

The language programmes range from 17 weeks to 61 weeks depending on the country to which you are posted.

Courses to learn Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Amharic are the most common and although they are required for the various positions these are also life skills that could prove to be valuable at a later date.

Attaché and adviser posts are under the auspices of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and are administered with the MOD by the International Policy and Planning (IPP) directorate.

The nomination and clearance procedures can be more complicated than for other assignments and may therefore take longer, but are still organised through your Career Manager.

The rewards and diversity of an LFS cannot be understated.

Petty Officer (Catering Services) Ian Vickers is currently employed as the House Manager in the private residence to the Chief of Staff of Supreme Allied Command Transformation, NATO, in Norfolk, Virginia, USA.

His primary role of House Manager is to ensure the smooth running of Raleigh House, on the

banks of the Lafayette River in a quiet neighbourhood, just six or seven minutes drive from the busy NATO Headquarters and currently resided in by a RN Vice Admiral.

This includes a variety of jobs; whether it is the successful execution of Raleigh House's many functions, the daily organising of various uniforms needed for numerous official and social events, or the upkeep and maintenance of Raleigh House through either self-help or contractors.

Across the other side of the world, Chief Petty Officer (Supply Chain) Jeff Lovatt is undertaking an LFS with an operational spin.

As the Assistant RN Liaison Officer for the Middle East he is based in Dubai, and supports RN maritime deployments to the Gulf and Indian Ocean.

Only 20 minutes from the Herrick strategic RAF air hub at Minhad his scope of duties can swing from a royal ceremonial visit or maintenance period for RN warships alongside Dubai to liaising with the RAF at Minhad regarding vital high priority ship stores disembarking the Joint Supply Chain destined for Afghanistan.

With a two-and-a-half-year LFS assignment to Dubai his continuity and experience in post in the Middle East is key as other Logisticians conduct short Op Tours in Bahrain, Minhad and Herrick.

So, the opportunities are out there all over the world for the taking, and will provide challenging, yet rewarding and diverse experiences for you and your family.

If you are interested in overseas assignments, further advice on any LFS issue is available through your Career Manager and detailed guidance can be found in JSP 468 (Regulations and Procedures for Loan Service).

Training specialists dine in style

OFFICERS of the Training Management (TM) specialisation held their annual Conference and Dinner at HMS Sultan in March.

The conference, which was attended by more than half of the officers within the specialisation, was on the theme of *The Future of Learning* and explored the TM contribution to both Future Force 2020 (FF2020) and the enabling of the RN Vision.

The conference was opened by Cdre Mark Slawson, Commandant of the Defence College of Electro-Mechanical Engineering, while Cdre Tim Lowe (Deputy Flag Officer Sea Training) delivered the keynote address. Sponsorship for the event was provided by BAE Systems and by the Royal Navy and Royal Marine Charity (RNRMC).

The conference was followed by a Mess Dinner at which Rear Admiral Simon Lister (Chief Naval Engineer Officer) was the Guest of Honour. Other honoured guests were Rear Admiral Rymer, Cdre Slawson and representatives of BAE Systems and of the RNRMC.

Serving TM officers were joined at the dinner by a number of their retired colleagues who had served either as Instructor Officers or as TMs and who were members of the Training Management and Instructor Officers' Association (TMIOA – tmioa.co.uk).

Capt Phil Burrell, Head of the TM Specialisation, said: "I believe that it is important to make time to gather periodically in order to be able to be briefed on topical issues affecting the specialisation and to discuss and share ideas on developments and thinking in the areas of training, education and lifelong learning."

Where to look

GALAXY MESSAGES

Galaxy Message 12-2012: Royal Navy Support To HM Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

DEFENCE INTERNAL BRIEFS (DIBS)

21/12: Consultation launched on Future Armed Forces Pension Scheme: A new Armed Forces Pension Scheme (currently referred to as Future AFPS) will be introduced from April 2015.

20/12: Contingency plans to use the Armed Forces to support the delivery of fuel to essential services: The Government has identified a range of measures it could take in the event of industrial action by hauliers who are subcontracted by the oil companies to deliver fuel to petrol station forecourts.

DEFENCE INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICES (DINS)

DIN 2012 DIN01-071: Terms of Service – Notification of changes to discharge regulations affecting Naval Service personnel

DIN 2012 DIN01-056: Naval Service Redundancy Programme – Policy

ROYAL NAVY TEMPORARY MEMORANDA

RNTM 071/12: Introduction of a Golden Hello for Direct Graduate Entry Engineering Officers

RNTM 072/12: Personnel Required to Complete CBRNDC25(SM) and CBRNDC10(SM) Firefighting Training Courses

RNTM 073/12: HMS Turbulent Decommissioning and Disposal

RNTM 074/12: CBRN Clothing Allowances – SURFLOT Units

RNTM 075/12: The Annual Armourers and Brasiers Junior Weapon Engineering Officer Prize

RNTM 076/12: Introduction of Logistics Branch Able Ratings and Leading Ratings Workplace Training Booklet (WTB)

RNTM 077/12: Fires and Floods reported in HM Ships, Submarines and RFA's – Analysis for 2011

RNTM 078/12: Medical Assistant Junior Rate Professional Development (Rolling OPS Check)

RNTM 079/12: Deployed Welfare Package (Overseas) (Update)

RNTM 080/12: Warfare Branch - Removal of 12 Month Sea Service Requirement for AB Warfare Ratings

RNTM 081/12: Warfare Branch - Temporary Removal of WPE as a Pre-Selection Requirement for Promotion to LS(SEA)/LS(MW)/LS(HM)(H)/LS(D)

RNTM 082/12: Royal Navy Senior Ratings Mess Dress – Supply Arrangements

RNTM 083/12: Surface Ship Munition Re-Supply at Action – Transfer of Responsibility From AWW Sub-Department to WE Department

RNTM 084/12: Medical Complaints

BFBS on UK TV

BRITISH Forces News, the BFBS main news programme, can now be found on UK TV screens.

Currently if you're in the military at one of 17 countries, or have access to Navy TV on board ship, you've been able to view the nightly news programme.

However it can now be found in your own home every weeknight at 18.30 UK time on Information TV (Sky channel 231 or Freesat channel 402), or online at www.bfbs.com/news.

Award for MOD campaign

A CAMPAIGN to warn Service personnel about the risks of releasing personal information on social media has won a Gold Award at the International Visual Communications Association Awards.

The MOD campaign, produced by the Directorate of Media and Communications together with CTN Communications (who produce the Navy's TwoSix-tv

programmes), is called *Think before you... Share*, and featured the memorable sight of a 'terrorist' and 'mum' sharing a cup of tea together on the sofa.

It offers guidance for people using social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube and warns personnel about the risks to themselves and potentially their families of releasing too much information.

Diversity update newsletter

THE APRIL 2012 edition of the D&I newsletter from the Navy Command Diversity and Inclusion team is now available.

Among the articles featured is the blessing of the Royal Navy's Muay Thai Association's gym by Dr Sunil Kariyakrawana, Buddhist Civilian Chaplain to the Military.

It also offers a breakdown of the Service Complain Commissioner's 2011 Annual Report, and details key findings.

Upcoming events of note are:

■ The Armed Forces' Buddhist (Spiritual and Moral Leadership) conference at Ampthor House, Andover, on June 5-8 – open to all Service personnel of the Buddhist faith and any Service personnel who would like to find out more (2011 DIN01-229 for more information);

■ The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Quad-Service conference at MOD Main Building on July 6 – open to all military personnel and MOD civil servants;

■ London Pride 2012 (see 2012 DIN 01-093 for more information) on July 7.

In addition, for reference:

■ 2012 DIN 07-049 gives course dates for Equality and Diversity training run by the Joint Equality and Diversity Training Centre;

■ RNTM 027/12 gives details of the revised procedure for the management of BH&D complaints in Navy Command;

■ and NCHQ has produced an information guide with issues of potential interest to Foreign and Commonwealth nationals serving in the Navy Service.

D&I Newsletter issue 7, April 2012, is available on the intranet.

Engineering fast track for Severn WO

FOR many years, writes WO David Pooley of HMS Severn, I was under the impression that you had to be an Engineering officer to become an accredited engineer so was delighted when discussing this issue with Severn's sponsor's husband Rear Admiral Nigel Guild that this was not the case and that there was a Streamlined Route.

After sending in my evidence I was awarded membership to IMarEST with Incorporated Engineer registration. I was very pleased to be presented my certification during the ships OSP to Cardiff by Professor Guild.

The Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) recognises that the training offered to the Royal Navy's Marine Engineering branch is amongst the best in the world.

Consequently, under the licence authority vested in it by the Engineering Council, and its own Royal Charter and in partnership with the RN, the IMarEST has carried out accreditation reviews of the training within the Marine Engineering branch.

This accreditation has created special streamlined application pathways for Marine Engineer officers and ratings within these branches by mapping various RN career points against the levels of IMarEST Professional Membership and Registration.

As a result of this collaboration, a bespoke Streamlined Route is in existence, which significantly reduces the amount of paperwork an individual applicant must submit in order to obtain IMarEST Membership and Engineering Council Professional Registration.

This means that with a few exceptions, officers and ratings within the Marine Engineering branch can apply for the following categories of IMarEST Membership

and Professional Registration:

■ Leading Engineering Technicians who have successfully obtained the LET Operational Performance Standard, are able to apply for IMarEST membership in the category of Associate Member with Engineering Technician registration.

■ Warrant Officers who have successfully been promoted to Warrant Officer 2, are able to apply for IMarEST membership in the category of Member with Incorporated Engineer registration.

■ Marine Engineer officers who have successfully obtained the Marine Charge Qualification, are able to apply for IMarEST membership in the category of Member with Incorporated Engineer registration.

■ Marine Engineer officers who have been appointed to a Charge appointment on a vessel of sufficient complexity eg frigate, destroyer and submarine, are able to apply for IMarEST membership in the category of Member with Chartered Engineer registration. (Applicants without the full academic requirement for Chartered Engineer registration will need to demonstrate the further learning to Masters Level.)

■ Marine Engineer officers who are promoted to the rank of commander are eligible to apply for IMarEST membership in the category of Fellow.

Applicants who have acquired the pre-requisite requirements at an earlier point within his or her career can apply using the IMarEST main application process.

Whilst serving in the RN, individuals have their status and professional development clearly structured and documented.

These qualifications are highly understood and respected amongst peers but often are difficult to translate to the civilian marine and engineering community.

Becoming one of IMarEST's



● River-class Fishery Patrol Vessel HMS Severn

Corporate members and obtaining a registered (eg Chartered) status provides independent civilian recognition of an individual's current career standing, Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and experience level.

In this way, it provides translation of RN attainments into a civilian qualification, which verifies that the holder is fully competent, qualified and committed as an Engineering Professional.

It is a stamp of quality that is internationally recognised in the engineering community. In dealings with contractors and external authorities professional registration will give independent credibility to your engineering status.

In addition, as an IMarEST registrant RN personnel complement their RN professional development by:

■ Having access to a network of similarly qualified and experienced civilian marine experts.

■ Staying up to date with issues affecting the wider marine industry.

■ Having a greater influence in the global marine community.

■ Holding civilian credentials that are respected worldwide.

■ Having already built up a network of contacts that may assist you in finding an industry position upon your resettlement phase.

Further information and application forms can be found on the IMarEST website (www.imarest.org).

Information on registration and the benefits of registration, along with case studies can be found on the Professional Technician website at <http://www.professional-technician.org.uk/about.php>

The Chief Naval Engineer Officer, Rear Admiral Lister, has highlighted the importance of professional registration in his letter to Naval Engineers in March 2012.

This letter and further details on professional registration are available on the CNEO's website at http://cwo-r-web-001.cwo.dii.r.mil.uk/CNEO/professional_registration.html

Shadow postcodes for BFPO addresses

IN A POSITIVE move for Service personnel and their families, BFPO and Royal Mail have introduced a UK 'shadow' postcode database for all BFPO addresses.

People have found it difficult to access web-based shopping and services due to the inability of certain sites to accept BFPO addresses.

This was one of the areas of weakness identified by the Armed Forces Covenant interim report in 2011.

A technical solution has been developed which links each BFPO number with a unique, but non-geographic, postcode.

The new postcodes are solely for use on websites, but there will be no change to the current BFPO postal address procedures where the BFPO number remains the last line of the address.

However, these new postcodes are a commercial product that companies can purchase and may require some changes to the company's own website – so neither Royal Mail or the MOD can insist commercial companies buy this product.

There will be an additional benefit as credit reference agencies use UK address listings as part of their assessment for a credit rating, which caused problems when BFPO addresses were not recognised, damaging the credit rating of those serving overseas.

Fuller details can be found in DIN2012 DIN01-103: BFPO and Royal Mail introduce Shadow Postcodes to recognise BFPO addresses for online services.



The Union Jack Club more than a shore leave!



All serving members of the Armed Forces are welcome to use the Club.



Accommodation



Free gym



Bar & Restaurant

020 7902 6000

www.ujclub.co.uk



Deaths

Sergeant Luke Taylor RM. Joined the Royal Marines 1997. Shot and killed at the main entrance to Lashkar Gah Main Operating Base in Helmand province, Afghanistan March 26. Aged 33. *Page 6.*

Admiral Sir Raymond Lygo KCB. Joined the Fleet Air Arm in 1942 as a naval airman and earned his wings in Ontario. He was commissioned as a sub-lieutenant RNRV and trained as a Seafire pilot at Yeovilton. As a member of 887 Naval Air Squadron he joined the carrier Indefatigable in 1944 on Russian convoy duties and covered attacks on the Tirpitz. Indefatigable joined the British Pacific Fleet late 1944 and contributed to attacks on Japanese installations in Sumatra, Formosa (Taiwan) and the Japanese mainland. As he was launching from the flight deck she became the first British ship to be hit by a kamikaze pilot 1945. Post war he transferred to the regular Navy and became a qualified flying instructor and returned to the US in 1949 to fly Phantoms and Banshees with the first East Coast jet squadron, ashore and in the carrier Philippine Sea. Back in Britain in 1951 he converted to jets, learned to fly helicopters and was type-qualified in the four-engine Lancaster bomber; he commanded the Navy's first jet training squadron to embark on Ark Royal. Early promotion to commander in 1956 was followed by two staff jobs and command of the new frigate Lowestoft. Promoted to captain at aged 39 he was appointed to his first Ministry of Defence post as deputy director of Naval Air Warfare. Appointed in command of the new frigate Juno and the 5th frigate squadron and commanded Ark Royal 1969-71 becoming a national figure after he was exonerated by an official board of inquiry following a collision with a Soviet destroyer. 1972 he was promoted to rear admiral as Flag Officer Carriers and Amphibious Ships, then as Director of Naval Manpower and Training, followed by Vice-Chief of the Naval Staff (VCNS) and acting First Sea Lord. He was appointed KCB in 1977 and retired as a full admiral in 1978 while only 54. His autobiography *Collision Course: Lygo Shoots Back* was published in 2002. President of the St Vincent Association. March 7. Aged 87.

Rear Admiral Ian Robertson, CB, DSC. Commissioned as a temporary acting sub-lieutenant (Aircrew) RNRV and qualified as a pilot 1942. After flying Lysanders at Arbroath he joined 827 Naval Air Squadron flying the Fairey Barracuda and at the age of 22 was awarded the DSC for his courage and skill duing anti-shipping operations off the Norwegian coast flying from the carriers Furious, Implacable and Victorious; taking part in the first Fleet Air Arm attack on the Tirpitz (Operation Tungsten). Selected for transfer into the RN 1944 he was promoted to lieutenant and gained watch-keeping experience on board Obedient 1945 then qualified as an instructor teaching sub-lieutenants to fly. Promoted to commander, he was senior airman at Culdrose and in Albion. His first command was Keppel and as a captain in 1963 he commanded Mohawk, Culdrose and Eagle in 1970. As

a rear-admiral he commanded the reserve fleet and reserve personnel and was Director of Naval Recruiting; he retired in 1974 and was appointed CB that year. In retirement his charitable work included being director-general of the Navy League, supporting Sea Cadets and the Girls Nautical Training Corps (later renamed the Sea Cadet Association). February 22. Aged 89.

Rear Admiral Nicholas Poland CB. Entered Dartmouth under the King's Cadetship scheme. When war broke out he was a young lieutenant and second-in-command of Eclipse which was bombed during the Norwegian campaign and had to be towed back to Shetland to bury her dead. After survivor's leave he was drafted to coastal Forces and his first command was torpedo boat No.32 in which he saw action in the North Sea, the Channel when based at Dover and after his MTB was shipped to Alexandria round the Cape, he also took part in various operations in the eastern Mediterranean. 1942 he qualified as a torpedo expert and was appointed to the Naval Air Station in Mull of Kintyre which was responsible for the armament of Swordfish and Barracuda aircraft to Furious in which he took part in the Fleet Air Arm's most successful attacks on the Tirpitz (Operation Tungsten). He converted to the Torpedo and Anti-Submarine (TAS) specialisation 1947, completed a tour as torpedo and Asdic (sonar) officer of a submarine squadron becoming a commander in 1950 and appointed to the air warfare division of the Admiralty. He promoted a series of highly classified projects including the establishment of the under water test range in the Bahamas and as the national representative on the NATO Standing Group in Washington, formulating NATO defence policy; he was appointed CBE in 1962. His final post as a captain was Director of Undersea Warfare in the MOD. Promoted to rear-admiral he was chief of staff to the C-in-C Home Fleet from 1965 to his retirement in 1968. Appointed CB 1967. In 1992 he published *The Torpedomen*. March 10. Aged 95.

Lt Cdr Peter J C Cobby. Joined as a boy seaman 1945 and served in Vanguard; by 1949 he was a leading seaman in a minesweeping trawler in the Mediterranean serving as her chief boatswain's mate. 1951 he qualified as a diver and drafted to the Mediterranean Fleet Clearance Diving Team responsible for clearing ports and harbours of munitions left over from WW2. Between 1954-58 he was a senior diver in the minehunter Brencley, qualified as a clearance diver 1st class and as an instructor and studied for promotion to sub lieutenant. During his course in 1957 he was called from the classroom to West India Dock in London where a giant German mine had been found lying in the mud; he and two other divers made repeated dives and worked by touch in the dark to render it safe and were awarded BEMs for their skill and gallantry; he worked on a similar mine discovered off the breakwater of Portland Harbour in 1969, and received a commendation from his

Commander-in-Chief. After returning to sea as a watchkeeping officer (1958-59) in the diving tender Reclaim he became officer-in-charge of the Admiralty Experimental Diving Team overseeing underwater demolition and radiography trials. 1961-62 he was navigator in Eastbourne then 1st Lieutenant and diving officer of the minehunter Dingley. 1965-67 he taught at the Joint Services Bomb Disposal School then diving training officer at Vernon until 1968. He returned to Reclaim for deep diving trials and salvage and was involved in raising the crashed Aer Lingus Viscount Flight 712 from the seabed south-east of Ireland; he wrote the procedures for rendering safe Polaris missiles and located an experimental torpedo lost in Loch Long in Scotland. He was loaned to the US Navy 1970-73 and spent a record-breaking 21 days in a pressurised bathysphere at a simulated depth of 1,000ft; he also helped to salvage a US Marine Corps aircraft that had crashed off the coast of North Carolina. Appointed officer-in-charge of the RN Saturation Diving Team and Deputy Superintendent of Diving, he was responsible for the conduct and safety of dives in support of physiological experiments at depth but discovered that the Navy was not going to continue its diving research and he resigned from the Service. He became head of a deep-diving school at Fort William, which became regarded as the most advanced civilian diving school in the world. February 2. Aged 82.

Lt Cdr 'Cherry' Westwood FAA. Joined as a Naval Airman 2nd Class and had pilot training in Canada. In 1943 with 880 Naval Air Squadron he was flying the Seafire IIC (modified Spitfire) from Indomitabile giving fighter cover for convoys in the Mediterranean during the invasion of Sicily (Operation Husky); Indomitabile was torpedoed and limped back to Malta. Three weeks later his squadron rejoined the carrier en route to America for repairs but disembarked when passing Gibraltar to await Stalker destined for the Salerno landings. From Stalker he flew seven 80-minute sorties for the first two days and on the third day his controls malfunctioned so he diverted to a small airfield at Montecorvino and was caught between the Allied forces and the enemy, with German artillery firing over his head at American troops trapped on the beach he took cover in a trench. Later his aircraft was refuelled and he flew to Malta. 1944 he was appointed flying instructor at RNAS Yeovilton and post-war flew Fireflies in a secret trials unit in Worcestershire. 1949-51 he was senior pilot of 728 Naval Air Squadron and after spending five years as an air traffic controller he transferred to the RAF. February 1. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr Michael Wallrock RNR. Enrolled in the Thames Nautical Training College, the square-rigged Worcester 1937 where he earned the post of Chief Cadet Captain and places in the boxing, rugby and cricket teams. At outbreak of war he was a cadet in the four-masted barque Abraham Rydberg after which he joined Jackal employed in convoy protection. Upon entry to Malta one of his flotilla was mined and he picked

up many of the oil-soaked survivors in Jackal's whaler. His flotilla took part in campaigns to prevent Crete falling and later his ship's boats rescued nearly 700 from Sphakia. The remainder of 1941 Jackal fought against Vichy French naval forces off Lebanon, escorted or provided diversions for Malta convoys before being torpedoed by an aircraft off Derna in North Africa. After repairs in Alexandria she was bombed and set on fire and had to be sunk by a torpedo from Jervis which was crammed with the survivors of three ships. Appointed to Eridge as navigator, with four other Hunts, his ship bombed Mersa Matruh and sank an ammunition ship but was later torpedoed by an E-Boat and was towed to Alexandria by the Aldenham but was assessed as beyond worthwhile repair. Onboard MTB309 he was lucky to survive the assault on Tobruk with a deck full of 100 octane petrol cans stowed between the torpedo tubes. Appointed as navigator to Pakenham 1943 in company with Paladin she attacked a convoy southwest of Marsala sinking a torpedo boat but was damaged and taken in tow, which was abandoned because of threat of air attack and Pakenham was sunk by torpedo from Paladin. He then joined the newly-built Hunt-class Talylbot that fought several engagements of varying success against German torpedo boats in the Channel then assigned to the American sector off Omaha Beach supporting the Normandy invasion and in a successful battle off Le Havre; for these actions he was awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French and was twice mentioned in dispatches. He accepted the surrender of six U-boats in Loch Erriboll while assigned to the "lease-lend" frigate Rupert which was returned to the US 1946 and her crew repatriated in the Queen Mary. After qualifying as a square-rig master mariner in late 1947 he helped to run the Outward Bound Sea School operating the Prince Louis sail training vessel. February 17. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr Peter John Angell DSC. Joined the Royal Navy as a Special Entry cadet in 1937 and was under training on board Southampton when war broke out. After taking charge of a small boat to help evacuate beaches at Dunkirk he was in Hood witnessing the bombardment of the French fleet 1940. He volunteered for the submarine service and within a year was the junior hand in the submarine Trident on operations off Norway. 1941 he became liaison officer in the Polish submarine Sokol which penetrated Navarin Bay and torpedoed the Italian destroyer Aviere; two weeks later Sokol torpedoed the 2,000-ton Italian tanker Berbera. Aged 23 he passed his Perisher course and commanded the training submarine H34. 1943 he was given command of Sea Rover in which he sank nine Japanese vessels and damaged two more off the coast of Malaya and Sumatra; he was awarded a DSC. Post war he accepted the surrender of German U-boats at Londonderry and served in Eagle during the Suez Crisis 1956; he took his 'Golden Bowler' in 1959. February 18. Aged 92.

Dennis 'Squire' Wilkins. Fleet Air Arm Pilot. Joined the FAA 1943 as an observer (navigator) in the Swordfish 'Stringbag' but transferred to the role of pilot, going solo 1946 after 11 hours in a de Havilland Tiger Moth; his first deck-landing was on Implacable 1947. He flew Fireflies with 812 Naval Air Squadron from Ocean in the Mediterranean (1948-49) and survived a forced landing when his Seafire XV suffered an engine failure at 5,000ft making a wheels-up landing in a Scottish field in 1950. During the Korean War he was lent to the Royal Australian Navy and flew from Vengeance and Sydney (1953). A mainstay of the England rugby XV for three seasons he captained the Royal Navy XV in 1952-53 season and played again for the Navy 1956; he played 13 times for England. His last flight as pilot was 1957 and his last appointment was as battery commander at the Royal Tournament Field Gun competition 1958. January 30. Aged 87.

Lt Cdr Condie Sandeman. Joined as Special Entry Cadet (Executive branch) 1939. Appointments included Norfolk (Scapa/Iceland patrol), Channel and Atlantic convoy escorts, Orion (Mediterranean) and Dauntless. Specialised in Torpedo Branch and later transferred to Electrical Branch upon its inception; Forth (Mediterranean), exchange service with the RAN early '50s and ASWE, Portsmouth. Took original 'Golden Bowler' under first redundancy scheme late '50s. March 13. Aged 90.

Chiou Yiu Nam GM. Seaman RFA. Helicopter flight deck party and also trained in firefighting on board RFA Sir Galahad. When she was hit by Argentinian bombs in the Falklands, wearing a protective asbestos suit, he fought his way through smoke and flames into the bowels of the ship bringing men to safety and although 48 seamen and soldiers were killed, at least ten owed their survival to Chiou. He remained reluctant to be recognised officially for his bravery however in 1983 he agreed to fly from Hong Kong to London where the Queen invested him with the George Medal. He retired from the RFA 1969 for health reasons; representing one of the last generations of locally-recruited sailors he returned to live in Hong Kong. February 14.

Lt Am Wilson. Commanded X6 X-craft during World War 2. Aged 94.

John Kerley. ERA. Served on-board Peacock 1952-55 and a member of the Association. March 1.

Robert George 'Bunts' Ramson. Served aboard Peacock as a Signalmen 1947-49 and a member of the association. March 29.

Roy Leslie Goby. PO Seaman. Served aboard Peacock 1945-47 and a member of the association.

Robert A Thompson. CPO Ck. Served 1959-81 at Pembroke, Vernon, Jaguar and Minerva. March 3. Aged 76.

Bertie Leonard Harding. CPO Writer. Served 1949-72 on board Implacable (1950-51), Theseus (1956-57) and Bulwark (1963); also in Malta (1955) and Hong Kong

(1968) and shore bases Victory, Sultan and Centurion. Member of NSBRA and BP Club. March 13. Aged 80.

Cyril Norman Fairman. CPO Cox'n. Served 1942-46 at Ganges and aboard H44, L26, Severn, Spiteful and Stoic in the Arctic, Mediterranean and Far East including Malta GC and Leros/Samos replenishment operations and as Cox'n to Lt Cdr Donald Cameron VC (Tirpitz Attack) in S class boats 1946. February 2. Aged 88.

Brian William 'Wally' Walder. Ldg Signalmen. Served 1948-62 at Ganges, Bruce, Morecambe Bay, Saintes, Lascaris, Liverpool, Gilkicker, Indomitabile, Coquette, Mercury, Charity, Central, Ceylon, RNB Portsmouth, Undine and Rocket. April 2. Aged 79.

David George MacLeod. PORP1. Served 1946-57 St Vincent and Ganges, HMS Duke of York, Loch Fada (Derry Flotilla), Redpole, Mauritius, Kenya, Boxer and Bulwark also RNXS HMS Cambria (South Wales). Member of Ganges, Loch Fada, Kenya and Duke of York Associations. March 20. Aged 82.

Frederick 'Fred' Hodgkinson Page. AB. Served 1941-46 in Antrim and Tartar; Russian and Malta Convoys and Operations Torch, Husky and Avalanche. January. Aged 91.

David 'Taff' Watkins. ERA. Ex-RHS Holbrook. Served 1943-57 in Figsard, St Kitts, Superb (Cruiser) and submarines Alarm, Sirdar, Sentinel, Sea Scout, Excalibur and Springer. April 6. Aged 84.

Thomas 'Tom' Dixon. AB. Served in Vespa 1943-45 and a member of the association. April 8.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION
Michael 'Mike' John Savage RM. Life member of Chesham and Amersham branch. Founder member and secretary for 20 years, treasurer for ten years to present day; as deputy Standard Bearer he carried the old standard at the re-dedication in 1991. February 28. Aged 76.

James 'Jim' Rose. Able Seaman. Served 1947-50 in Royal Arthur, Narvik and Kenya. Norwich branch. March 4. Aged 83.

Margaret Josephine Bannerman (née Stewart). Cook. Called up 1942 and served in Ganges and at Blundellsands (Liverpool). City of Glasgow RNA and Life member of WRNS Association. March 24. Aged 89.

Keith 'Dusty' Miller RM. Served on board Glasgow, Sheffield, St Vincent, Bermuda and RM Barracks Eastney. Enrolled Royal Fleet Reserves 1961. Maidstone RNA. Aged 76.

Eddie Thwaites. FAA. Former Social Secretary Maidstone branch. March 18.

Victor 'Vic' Whitney. AB Gunner. Served at Royal Arthur, Victory, Excellent and Finisterre, Lancaster Castle and Argonaut. Branch Chairman for many years and later a Life Member of Watford branch. March 14. Aged 83.

Ron 'Nocker' White. AB. National Serviceman 1957-59. Served on board Ocean and Apollo. Vice President Hartlepool

branch. Associate member DLI Hartlepool and REME Billingham. March 14. Aged 76.

Mostyn Thomas. Served 1943-46 with Coastal Forces. Sunderland RNA and a Founder member and Secretary of North East branch of the Coastal Forces Veterans. March 18. Aged 86.

Charles William 'Bill' Nicholson. CPO CEM(L). Served 1945-68 on board Bermuda, Roberts, submarine Acheron, St Kitts, Delight, Leeds Castle, Rame Head, Rhyl, Forth and as CPO in charge of electric and electronic Close Range Gunner Systems on board Gambia (1958-61). Upon leaving the RN he worked on the Polaris guided missile programme on assignment with the US Navy in Florida. Member of HMS Gambia Association and the RNA. March 25. Aged 84.

Harold Riley. S&S branch (Jack Dusty). Served 1942-46 in Indomitabile in the Mediterranean (Invasion of Sicily) was torpedoed and sent to USA for repair. Asbury shore base in New Jersey then to the escort carrier Premier used to ferry aircraft from USA to UK. Took part in mine laying operations and attacks on shipping off Norway; Hornbill at Oxford, then Highflyer at Trincomalee. President of St Helens branch. March 26. Aged 88.

Alfred Ronald 'Ronnie' Jones. Served WW2 in Lossie, Atlantic Convoys and Burma. Long-term Chairman Conway British Legion and full member Llandudno RNA. March 25. Aged 86.

Keith Burns. LMA Submariner. Served in submarines Churchill (1970-73) and Superb (1974-77). Spennymoor and Ferryhill RNA. April 6. Aged 65.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION
Peter Robertson. L/Cook. Served aboard Rinaldo. Aged 83.
Don Danby. S/M. Served aboard Marvel. February 18. Aged 83.
Harry Amos. AB. Served aboard Plucky. March 12. Aged 77.
Canon Peter Oades. Tel. Served aboard Loyalty. March 22. Aged 88.
John Hyatt. AB. Served aboard Lioness. April 10. Aged 78.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION
Lt Cdr George M Warren RNRV. Joined 1940 and flew various Fleet Air Arm aircraft at RNAS Yeovilton (759 NAS), Aboukir 1941 (700 NAS), Western Desert 1941 (806 NAS), Ratmalana Ceylon 1942, Indomitabile (Pedestal) and Victorious (882 NAS Torch), USA, Hawaii and S W Pacific. RNAS Eglinton 1943 (787 NAS), Wittering & Tangmere 1943-45 and IFDF Boscombe Down 1945; retired 1946. Cotswold Fleet Air Arm Association and Hon. HMS Victorious Association. April 1. Aged 91.

Thomas 'Tom' R Chisnal. AM1(A). Served 1939-46. Wrekin branch. November 2011.

Roy Turner. AM(A). Served 1944-1946. Joined the Birmingham branch in 1985. March 20. Aged 86.

Sports lottery

March 17: £5,000 – Surg Lt Cdr D C Henning; £1,500 – LH A C Dickson; £500 – Cpl M J Hill RM.

March 24: £5,000 – AB1 W A Gegg; £1,500 – Lt Cdr D R Downie; £500 – LH C D Vaughan.

March 31: £5,000 – Lt Cdr R Watson; £1,500 – AB1 R Gould; £500 – Cpl K Campbell.

April 7: £5,000 – Lt M D Allinson; £1,500

– LH V A Bentley; £500 – Cpl J K McGill.

April 14: £5,000 – Mne T C Simpson; £1,500 – CPO S A Johns; £500 – CH J Meacock.

Due to an administrative complication during December's 2011 Christmas draw, there will be a Diamond Jubilee re-draw on June 2 2012 to establish a winner of the £9,000 prize. This will be in addition to the normal six prizes.

Operational honours

The Operational Honours list, which recognises service on operations in Afghanistan and national operations for the period April 1 2011 to September 30 2011, is below.

AFGHANISTAN

Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE): Maj Gen Edward Grant Martin Davis, Royal Marines

Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE): Cdr Carol Ann Betteridge, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service; Lt Col Alexander Nicholas Janzen, Royal Marines; Col Oliver Andrew Lee, Royal Marines

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE): Maj Niki Richard Dalgliesh Cavill, Royal Marines; Capt Ross Drinkwater, Royal Marines; CSgt Stephen Scott, Royal Marines

Distinguished Service Order (DSO): Lt Col Ewen Alexander Murchison, Royal Marines

Conspicuous Gallantry Cross (CGC): Cpl Simon Wright-Hider, Royal Marines

Military Cross (MC): Medical Assistant Liam Matthew O'Grady, Royal Navy; Cpl Paul Anthony Vice, Royal Marines; Marine Mark George Williams, Royal Marines

Mention in Despatches (MiD): Cpl Ross William Adams, Royal Marines; Maj Aleck Michael George Burrell, Royal Marines; Sgt Robert Alfred Driscoll, Royal Marines; Maj Nicholas Paul Foster, Royal Marines; Acting Cpl Craig Haslam, Royal Marines; Capt Joseph Patrick McElvenney, Royal Marines; Air Engineer Mechanic Michelle Ping, Royal Naval Reserve; Acting Cpl Michael Owen Rossi, Royal Marines

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS):

Chaplain David Alexander Conroy; Sgt Alexander James MacNeil Farrant, Royal Marines; Cpl Lewis William Frisby, Royal Marines; Lt Benjamin Paul Kirby; Lt Victoria Susan Long, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service; Lt Col Dominic Peter May, Royal Marines; Maj Matthew Charles Parker, Royal Marines; Acting CSgt Mark Ian Ramsey, Royal Marines; Lt Cdr Peter John Selwood, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service; Chaplain Scott James Sinclair Shackleton; Lt Col Matthew Stovin-Bradford, Royal Marines; Sgt Matthew Gerard Weites, Royal Marines; Acting CSgt Adam Whittle, Royal Marines


REST OF THE WORLD
Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE): Cdr Robert Paul Dunn; Cdr Colin Nicholas Owen Williams

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE): Lt Col Leonard Anthony Brown, Royal Marines; CPO Logistics (SC) Stephen Lewis


Distinguished Service Cross (DSC): Lt Cdr James David Byron Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM): Acting Colour Sergeant Adrian Thomas Lister, Royal Marines

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS): WO2 Engineering Technician (Marine Engineering) Jeremy Bean; PO (Diver) Mark Stuart Cocking; Rear Admiral Russell George Harding; Cdre John Matthew Leonard Kingwell; Able Seaman Warfare Specialist (Tactical SM) 2 Bruce Alan Morley

MISCELLANEOUS
George Medal (GM): Lt Cdr Ian Thomas Molyneux (Posthumous)
Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB): Lt Cdr Richard John Talbot



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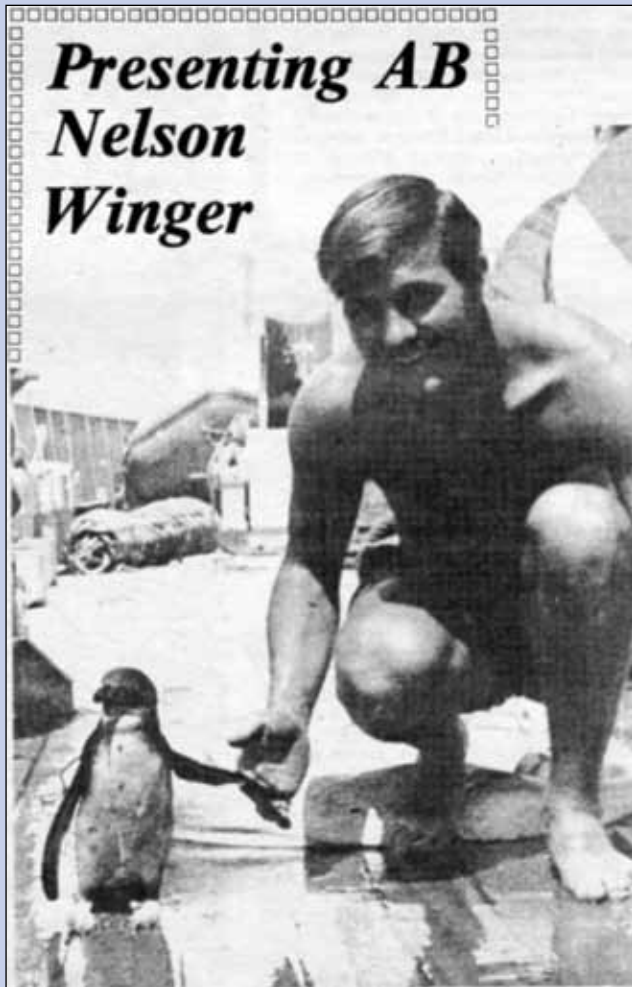
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1972-1982-1992-2002 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● AB Nelson Winger, who was briefly drafted to HMS Wolverton in 1972

May 1972

THE little penguin was a sorry sight as he struggled to climb on to the jetty in Simonstown Dockyard in South Africa.

But help was at hand, or perhaps at wing, when he was spotted by the ship's company of HMS Wolverton.

He was taken on board and after a quick hose-down settled into his mess – a box of sawdust near the brow.

AB Nelson Winger, as he became known, showed a good pair of sea legs and apparently enjoyed his time on board, although he strongly objected to a saltwater bath and did not enjoy being put in his own paddling pool, made from a reel cover.

His draft ended when Wolverton left Simonstown and he was handed to a seabird sanctuary.

May 1982

Navy News in May 1982 was a Falklands Task Force special edition, with a centre-page spread of HMS Hermes and HMS Invincible leaving Portsmouth and a round-up of ships and units in the South Atlantic.

Although news travelled more slowly in 1982, the paper managed to run the recapture of South Georgia on April 25 on the front page.

Confirmation of the operation had come in the memorable message from the Task Force to the Government: "Be pleased to inform Her Majesty that the White Ensign flies alongside the Union Jack in South Georgia. God save the Queen."

May 1992

ROYAL Marine Cpl Peter Robinson, of 40 Commando, was about to become immortalised in bronze as the 'Falklands Yomper.'

Cpl Robinson was the inspiration for the 12ft statue of a Marine that now stands on the grassy mound overlooking the seafront at the entrance to the Royal Marines Museum in Eastney, Portsmouth.

The statue was created by master sculptor Philip Jackson and inspired by the world-famous photograph of Cpl Robinson, who had actually served with 45 Cdo during the conflict, making his way towards Port Stanley with a Union Jack attached to his radio mast. The original photo was taken by PO(Phot) Pete Holgate, 3 Cdo Bde.

May 2002

THE missing flag from HMS Monmouth was reported to be alive and well – and apparently enjoying some leisure pursuits whilst in captivity.

The frigate's black flag had been taken from her while she was in refit in Rosyth, but occasional messages were sent to Navy News to confirm its safety.

The paper received a note from the flag's holders confirming that "great lengths had been gone to in order to ensure the flag would continue to lead as normal a life as possible."

Pictures were sent to the paper to show the flag had been taken during pigeon shooting and quad-biking.

The fingers of suspicion for the flagnap were pointed at HMS Liverpool, Invincible, Spartan and Sceptre.

Ask Jack

Combined Operations Association: James Jepson is a founder member and Vice President of the association, which is dedicated to preserving the history of combined ops in WW2. We undertake lectures and displays including uniforms. Whilst we have many items of uniforms of the Army and RAF, we have no RN Officers uniforms, and in particular a blue Battle Dress. May we, through Navy News, launch an appeal for such items for which we would cover any postal costs. If you can help contact James Jepson, Cameronian House, Furnace, Inveraray, Argyll, PA32 8XU or tel: 01499 500218.

Joseph Patrick McCarthy: My grandfather, Joseph McCarthy, was an AB on Lapwing when it was torpedoed in Russian waters in 1945. He also served in Drake (1941 & 43), Kelvin (41-43), Eaglet (1943). We also know he served in the Royal Oak. We are looking for any information or photographs from shipmates of my grandfather. Please contact Mrs M R Aubrey – née McCarthy, 30 Folly Lane, St Pauls, Cheltenham, Gloucester GL50 4BY or tel: 01242 699172.

Royal Navy Cooks: John is asking whether there is a RN Cooks Association already formed, if not is anyone interested in becoming a founder member of a RN Cooks Association? Please contact John Salussolia at jsalussolia@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 07544 302860. You can also write to 260 Farmborough, Netherfield, Milton Keynes MK6 4JB.

Sir Peter Scott Paintings: Can anyone remember these paintings that were on the bulkheads in the junior ratings dining hall on HMS Ark Royal IV and also does anyone know of their current location? Bill served with 898 Squadron on Ark Royal's first commission. Contact Bill Quintmere at billquintmere123@btinternet.com or tel: 01903 714872.

HMS Vernon: When visiting the Admin

Reunions

MAY 2012
Indefatigable Old Boys Association: Celebrates its 29th annual reunion, on May 26 at Carreg Mon Hotel, Llanfairpwll, Anglesey. Visit the Old School which is now JSMTIC Indefatigable. Secure your place by completing the form at <http://ts-indefatigable-oba.org/?p=173> or contact Tom Keyes at tomkeyes@hawes.co.uk or 4 Edison Drive, Upton Grange, Northampton NN5 4AB. RSVP by 6 May latest.

HMS Fearless: To mark the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War a dinner was held in Portsmouth for the Crew and embarked forces of HMS Fearless affectionately known as the Mighty Lion. Following on from this successful evening it has been decided to hold a further such event this year. On May 26 there will be a Gala Dinner to commemorate the 30th anniversary this event is to take place at the WO & SNR Rates mess at HMS Nelson. Details of the event can be found at <http://www.fearlesscomrades.com> the dedicated site for all ex Fearless crew. The dinner is not restricted to the crew of '82 if you have served at any time you will be welcome to attend. The formal dinner will be followed by a post dinner bash where we can accommodate a further 30 attendees. We look forward to seeing as many old and new faces as possible. Contact Terence McNally at terry.mcnally@baesystems.com or tel: 07525 077037.

JUNE 2012
Second HMS Manchester Association: The 2nd HMS Manchester Reunion will be held in the WO SR & SNCOs Mess, HMS Nelson from June 9 to 10. For further details visit the website at <http://www.2ma.org.uk/> or contact Steve Swaine at stevie27@hotmail.com tel: 01634 684717 or Ian Tidbury at iantids@ntlworld.com tel: 023 9225 3859.

Bay Class Frigates Association: Reunion at the Sarisbury Social Club, Sarisbury on June 12 commencing at 1200. All ex-Bay Class welcome. Contact Doug Turk at doug.turk@ntlworld.com or tel: 01252 378629 for details.

Falklands: A get together for Falklands veterans is planned for Plymouth on June 14. Many ships and men from the West Country sailed south to expel the invaders from the Falkland Islands. The ships of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Merchant Navy also played an important part in this Task Force and we are attempting to contact as many of the former crew members as possible living in the area. For more information contact Mark Richardson at manfy78@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01752 516948.

HMS King Alfred, the Portsmouth RNR unit, has links with both the Exbury Veterans Association and Exbury itself as the previous KA was (briefly) at Exbury (when it relocated from Shoreham at the end of World War 2). For most of the War, Exbury had been HMS Mastodon, and it also spent a short time as HMS Hawke. http://www.exbury.co.uk/website/during_war.aspx 2012 marks the 70th anniversary of the requisitioning of Exbury by the Admiralty and we will be marking the event, in combination with EVA's annual D-Day commemoration, on Saturday June 16. There will be a Service at Beaulieu Abbey at 1100 which will be taken by an RN Chaplain; afterwards a wreath will be laid at the Anchor Memorial in Exbury Gardens and a tree will be planted. Uniformed personnel from KA will attend, along with veterans and local dignitaries. The Service is open to all and we

Assignments

Capt Peter J Curtis RM to be Director of Music RM Band Portsmouth from September 24.

Capt Andrew J Gregory RM to be Director of Music RM Band Scotland at Dunfermline from September 10.

(Scott) block in HMS Vernon in the 1950s, on the wall facing you as you entered was a sledge, which I understand to have been used on Capt Scott's trek to the South Pole. If that is the case, when HMS Vernon closed, can anyone say what happened to it, bearing in mind the anniversary of the trek. Contact John Stevens, 463 Stenson Road, Littleover, Derby DE23 1LL.

HMS Unruly: Donald (George Thomas John) Olley has just celebrated his 90th birthday and has been searching for his old boat mate without success. Donald served in submarines during WW2, much of it spent on HMS Unruly. He also formed part of the crew that took the surrendered German U boat U776 around some of the UK ports. The man he is looking for is Horace Victor Baker who served on Unruly and came from Freshwater on Isle of Wight. He is also looking for 'Dick' Richards, a radar operator on the submarine who came from Portsmouth. If anyone can help, they can contact George Maccolmsen at George.Maccolmsen@submarine-museum.co.uk or write to George at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Haslar Road, Gosport, Hants PO12 2AS or tel: 023 9251 0354 extn: 226

HMS Illustrious Association: We are seeking new members. Anyone that has served in the fourth (1939-57) or current (1982-present day) HMS Illustrious, or family members of those who did are welcome. For further information please contact Miss Diane Coleman, National Secretary on 01424 720745 or Ann Lefley, Treasurer on 01903 771934 or Mike Brockwell, Vice Chairman at mp.brock@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01293 520352, leaving your name, address, phone number, email address and dates that you served on HMS Illustrious or your connection with the ship. A full information sheet and application form will be forwarded to you. We will be pleased to answer any further queries you may have.

would be very pleased to welcome visitors.

JULY 2012
Royal Marines Signals and Telecommunications Bi-annual Reunion 2012: The Sigs and Tels specialisations will be holding its reunion at the SNCO's Mess, CTCRM on July 14. This is open to all Ranks of both specialisations. If you were/are a serving member and would like to attend or would like further information, please contact CIS Trg Coy Clerk (Miss Sheila Wells) on 01392 414397 or email: ctcrm-sw-cistic-registry@mod.uk alternatively please call Signals Specialisation Advisor (WO1 Lee Carr RM) on 01392 414089 or email: ctcrm-ldgr-sig-wo1@mod.uk

AUGUST 2012
HMS Unicorn Association: Our 26th Reunion and AGM is in Lichfield from August 27 to 31. Further details from Patricia Brenchley at pbrenchley@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01326 315005.

SEPTEMBER 2012
HMS Diana Association: We are returning to the Midlands area for the second reunion of 2012. The reunion/AGM will be held from September 7 to 9 at The Coventry Hill Hotel, Rye Hill, Allesley, Coventry CV5 9PH. The reunion also includes a coach trip to The Leicester Senior Service Club on the Saturday afternoon. Anyone who has not got a hotel booking form please contact the Secretary at johnjackie.fisher1@virginmedia.com or 01163678360. Please don't leave it too late and be disappointed.

HMS Comus: Reunion from September 14 to 16, at the Maritime Club on Friday, Saturday at HMS Nelson, Victory Club from 1900 to 2359 and on Sunday after breakfast, Church Service and fond farewells for another year. Contact Bryan Cox at bryanvcx@hotmail.com or tel: 01903 232720 for further information.

14th Carrier Air Group Reunion Association: The 18th reunion for anyone who served with 804 and 812 NAS, 1946-52, HM Ships Ocean, Glory and Theseus, or at any other time, will be held on September 22 at the RNA Club, Royal Leamington Spa. Wives, partners and family members welcome. Further details from Ken Lambert at Lambert5nr@btinternet.com or tel: 01733 234655.

HMS Crane Association U23/F123 (1943-62): Reunion and AGM at the Gateway Hotel, Nottingham from September 28 to 30. All ex-Cranes and friends welcome. Details from Joe Smith at crane.bird@tiscali.co.uk or tel: 0161 736 4918 or Tony Nuttall on 0115 952 6363.

Battleship HMS Vanguard: Reunion from September 28 to 30 at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool. Full details can be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs C Harris on 01543 685099.

HMS Ocean Association: 25th Annual Reunion and AGM takes place at the Bedford Hotel, Blackpool from September 28 to October 1. A very warm welcome is extended to all ex-Oceans (R68 or L12), their families and friends, whether Association members or not, to join us on this happy occasion. For full details contact the Secretary, Jim Hogan JP at jimhogan1@sky.com or tel: 01253 795618.

OCTOBER 2012
Survey Ships Association: Reunion will be held on October 26 to 29 at The Melbourne Ardenlea Hotel, IOV. For information on membership and reunion, send SAE to The Secretary SSA, 8 Grosvenor Court, 74 East Lodge Park, Farlington, Portsmouth PO6 1BY, email: secretary@surveyships.org.uk or phone 023 9279 1258.

Trophy lives



TROPHY 4,461 is a silver group depicting Queen Elizabeth I on horseback; accompanying her are a huntsman and a hound while a figure of Diana, the Roman goddess of hunting, is handing a crossbow to Her Majesty.

This trophy, which is commonly referred to as the 'Goodwood Trophy', was presented to Mr W T Cartwright when his horse Ely won it at a Goodwood race meeting in 1865.

It was subsequently presented to the battleship HMS Queen Elizabeth in February 1919 by T G Cartwright Esq., a descendant of the original winner.

In May 1941 HMS Queen Elizabeth was in the Mediterranean and one of a large force of ships which had been sent to protect the island of Crete from an expected German assault.

The attack was opened on May 20 when the Luftwaffe bombed the island; subsequently enemy troops landed by parachute, transport aircraft and gliders – there was no sign of any enemy sea action.

The next day the destroyer Juno was bombed and sunk while a night action involving the cruisers Dido, Orion, Ajax and four destroyers resulted in several enemy troop ships being sunk.

It was clear that air superiority lay with the Luftwaffe and this led to a decision on May 21 to stop using merchant ships to deliver supplies for the beleaguered Army – henceforth only destroyers and the minelayer Abdiel were able to make the 800-mile round voyage from Malta and both enter and leave

Cretean harbours by night.

May 22 saw further intense Luftwaffe activity, the destroyer Greyhound being sunk together with the cruisers Gloucester and Fiji while the destroyers Kelly and Kashmir were both bombed and sunk within the next 24 hours.

With long-term defence of the island out of the question on May 27 it was decided to evacuate the Army using the port of Heraklion; of the 32,000 British troops in Crete 18,600 were safely rescued by the time the evacuation was terminated on June 1.

In the two-week period between the first German attack and the cessation of the evacuation, in addition to the ships already named, the Royal Navy had lost the cruisers Calcutta and York, the destroyers Hereward and Imperial plus 12 smaller vessels.

Fourteen of the other 43 ships involved in operations off Crete also sustained damage due to enemy action.

Queen Elizabeth was undamaged on this occasion but, on December 19 1941, she and the battleship Valiant were severely damaged by a daring Italian human torpedo attack while in Alexandria harbour.

Temporary repairs allowed her to eventually sail for Norfolk, Virginia, where she was under refit from September 1942 until June 1943.

On rejoining the Fleet after her refit in the United States she was sent to the Far East, finally returning to the United Kingdom in July 1945.

She was eventually scrapped at Dalmeir, on the River Clyde, in 1948.

Entries for the Deaths column and Swap Drafts in June's Noticeboard must be received by **May 11**

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Reporting from the Fleet



Naval Families Federation makes waves

The opinions and experiences of Royal Naval and Royal Marines families are always at the top of the NFF agenda, writes Jane Williams of Naval Families Federation.

A meeting with Andrew Robathan MP, one of the Defence Ministers is on the cards at the end of May.

We also have a number of meetings with Stakeholders, MOD, the Chain of Command and Other Government Departments packed into the schedule.

We are sure you have plenty to say, so please don't miss this opportunity, get in touch with your comments...

Consultation on Future Armed Forces Pension Scheme

A new Armed Forces Pension Scheme (currently referred to as Future AFPS) will be introduced from April 2015.

A consultation exercise is under way during which Service personnel will be asked their views on the new scheme.

External stakeholders, including the Central Advisory Committee on Pensions and Compensation, the NFF and other Service Families Federations, and the Forces Pension Society will also be consulted.

The first phase of consultation will inform the design of the new scheme.

An initial Consultation Document is available via our website: www.nff.org.uk.

Service personnel and their families are invited to read the document and then complete the online survey to register their views. The survey closes on May 11 2012.

The MOD will publish details

of the outline scheme design in late spring, taking account of responses received on the initial Consultation Document.

The second phase of consultation will seek the views of Service personnel on scheme design.

The consultation is being supported by a series of briefings at Service locations by the Future Armed Forces Pension Team.

Service personnel at locations not visited can still contribute by reading the Consultation Document and completing the online questionnaire.

This is your opportunity to have a say on the design of the new scheme. All personnel and family members are strongly encouraged to make their views known and considered.

Full details are available via: www.nff.org.uk

Rewards for Forces

This is a new website detailing online and in-store discounts for the Armed Forces community. The website is free to join, and is open to personnel from all three services, and their partners, veterans, widows/widowers, reservists and cadets.

Thousands of companies are involved in the scheme, including popular high street shops, restaurants and leisure facilities.

Once you have registered you will receive a handy newsletter each month, featuring the latest offers and deals. Visit www.nff.org.uk to find out more.

The NFF produce an E-Update every other month, are you receiving your round-up of news?

Highlights in the current edition include:

- NFF speaks to the Navy

Board

- Your feedback wanted on the Armed Forces Pay Award

- Spring 2012 *Homeport* out now

- Consultation on the Future Armed Forces Pensions Scheme

- Housing Information Centres to become the Housing Allocation Service Centre

- Tri-Service Survey on Adaptations to Service Families Accommodation (SFA)

- Service Complaints Commissioner Publishes Fourth Annual Report

- Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) Submission Dates for Claims

- Home to Duty Travel (HDT) Allowance: Retention of Personal Contribution for HDT(Public) at Three Miles

The update can be passed onto friends, family and colleagues who would find it useful. To join/leave the mailing list e-mail: info@nff.org.uk.

The e-update is issued every other month; the next is scheduled for May 2012.

The Ripple Pond

The Ripple Pond is a self-help support group in the South East of England for families of injured Servicemen and Women.

If you are a family member of an injured serviceman or woman and would like to join a group of other mums, dads, brothers, sisters, wives, husband then the Ripple Pond could help.

The Ripple Pond is a self help support group, where family members arrange to get together to express feelings safely in a non-judgmental environment, where everyone is heard.

The hope is that the South

Coast model will act as a model to other groups to start up around the country. For more information: www.nff.org.uk

HIC to HASC transition

The transition from the Housing Information Centres (HIC) to one Housing Allocation Service Centre (HASC) has brought forward some challenges.

Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) are working to resolve these issues and are updating both the Chain of Command and NFF on a weekly basis.

If you have any issues that you wish to contact us about, please get in touch admin@nff.org.uk

Project Blue

A collaborative project involving people from Customer Service, IT, Communications and Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), Project Blue was launched on March 2 2012.

Historically when families call into the Modern Housing Solutions (MHS) Helpdesk to log a response job, a letter is generated with the appointment details and then posted to the customer.

Under Project Blue customers raising a response job will be asked whether they would like to receive confirmation of their appointment and fault details by e-mail rather than post.

Customers will be able to 'opt-in' or 'opt-out' at any time, a clear benefit being that you can receive confirmation of the appointment within a few minutes.

MHS has reassured NFF that the email addresses will only be used for appointment confirmation and will not be used for any other purpose.

MHS Missed appointment?

If MHS are unable to attend an appointment then you could be eligible to receive a voucher from MHS to use at a number of high street retail chains.

If you do find yourself in that unfortunate position, please make sure that you discuss whether you are eligible to receive a voucher...

Saving water for everyone

There have been a number of recent media reports highlighting that large parts of the south east of England, east of England and parts of the Midlands continue to experience drought conditions – and as a result from April 5 hosepipe bans have been introduced by the following water companies – Southern Water, South East Water, Thames Water, Anglian Water, Sutton and East Surrey, Veolia Central and Veolia South East.

The hosepipe restrictions apply to Service Family Accommodation in the geographical areas concerned, both inside and outside the wire – and anyone found breaching the terms of the ban risk being fined up to £1,000.

Please ensure that you check with your provider about the restrictions in place... it is the occupier/licence holder who will be liable for any breaches.

Hosepipe ban

- Watering a garden or plants
- Cleaning a car or other vehicle (including a private leisure boat)
- Filling or maintaining a swimming or paddling pool (you may fill the latter using a hand held container from a tap though)
- Drawing water for domestic recreational use
- Filling or maintaining a

domestic pond or ornamental fountain (apart from ponds in which fish or other aquatic animals are kept)

- Cleaning walls, windows, paths, patios or other artificial outdoor surfaces, such as decking

Exceptions include; for health and safety reasons.

Saving water

There are some excellent tips on-line about how to save water as part of your normal day to day activities, on-line information is available from your water provider.

Reduce

- Only use your washing machine or dishwasher when you've got a full load.

- Fill your kettle only with as much water as you need – which also saves electricity.

- Don't leave the tap running – turn it on and off as required.

- Use your shower for a shorter period of time, if possible shower rather than bathe.

- When running a bath reduce the level of water in the bath.

Reuse

Advice on 'grey' water can be found on your provider's website.

Report

Ring your maintenance Helpdesk as soon as you discover a dripping tap or leak. Whilst small leaks will not be an urgent task, they will be dealt with and will save water in the long term.

Your experiences form the basis of our discussions.

To get in touch with the NFF:

Tel: 02392 654374.

E-mail: admin@nff.org.uk.

Write to: NFF, Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth PO2 8RN.



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● Richard Fletcher at St James's Palace

Golden day for Richard

A TEENAGER who enrolled on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme while a cadet at Scarborough unit has picked up his Gold Award in London.

Richard Fletcher, from the village of Snainton, was one of around 100 young people who gathered at the palace to meet and hear an address by the Duke of Edinburgh.

Richard's group – Yorkshire and Humberside – were then presented with their medals and certificates by Yorkshire-born mountaineer Alan Hinkes.

Richard, an apprentice at the Scarborough coachbuilders Plaxtons, said it was a fantastic day out and a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

CPO Julie Davies, of Scarborough unit, commended Richard for all his hard work and dedication, and noted that he completed the tasks in the minimum time of 18 months.

Africa is prize for top nine

AS *Navy News* went to press 21 young competitors were facing a challenging 36-hour assessment in the Quantock Hills of Somerset to determine which of them is worthy of a prestigious prize.

The participants, all members of UK uniformed youth organisations, have been chosen to compete in the last round of selection for the Duke of Westminster Award 2012, organised by CVQO and sponsored by the organisation's patron, the Duke of Westminster.

The final 21 were selected from more than 20,000 young people earning extracurricular qualifications with educational charity CVQO, with 250 of them getting the chance to take part in the competition.

And it is not just a matter of grabbing the main prize, as the top nine learners will participate in a three-week expedition to South Africa later this year.

The event will test communication, teamwork and leadership skills through a variety of demanding physical and mental tasks, and the activities undertaken during the challenge will meet the criteria for each candidate to achieve a Level 3 Award in Leadership from the Institute of Leadership and Management.

The Sea Cadets taking part are POC Cyrus Fan (Stockport unit), PPO Lloyd Glanville (Hull), C/Sgt Leon Holt (Walsall) and C/Cpl Jordan McClellan (Huyton with Roby).

The nine finalists were due to be announced at the end of last month, and will attend an awards ceremony and luncheon next month, where the Duke of Westminster Award winner and runners-up will be announced.

All finalists will then participate in the expedition to South Africa.

New members, old pics for PT branch

THE latest group of students has just passed out from the Sea Cadet Corps' national Physical Training course – but the branch is looking to the past as well as the future.

Just over 20 students, ranging from 13 right up to adults, finished their week-long course at the spiritual home of Royal Navy sport, HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth, overseen by the HQ Staff Officer PT, Lt Cdr (SCC) Vicki Marson RNR.

The assessed course, run twice a year in April and August, covers a wide range of skills, from pre-exercise warm-ups through to recreational training games for fun.

They learn how to organise and stage competitions, including the duties of officials – one part of the course sees a mini-Olympiad, where games in three different sports are staged concurrently and students learn to cope with rapid switches between sports.

The course ended with a spectacular one-hour pass-out (pictured right), where the students displayed some of the skills they learned on course – and much of the choreography was done in their own time after the end of the day's formal learning.

Many of the skills and ideas can be taken back to units, districts and areas, with public displays of clubswinging and the hornpipe creating eye-catching high-profile opportunities for the Corps to advertise itself at major events.



Students came from as far afield as Liverpool and Plymouth, and went away with qualifications recognised by the Corps and civilians organisations, as Lt Cdr Marson ensured that skills taught on the Corps course mapped across to civvy equivalents, meaning students also achieve one of four levels of sports leaders awards.

"I would like to thank all staff who helped and instructed on the course, and the students who

proved to be very professional," said Lt Cdr Marson.

"It was a very good-quality course, with lots of participation, and some outstanding delivery."

Lt Cdr Marson is keen to plot the history of the branch, and has put out a request for memorabilia – including old course photos or information about PT members at branch, district, area and national level.

A Facebook page has been

created to display the pictures, and it is hoped a reunion can be organised.

If you can help, contact Lt Cdr Marson at hqsopt@hotmail.co.uk

There are still spaces available on the national Corps field gun squad which will take part in competition at HMS Collingwood at the end of May.

Further details are available by looking on Westminster.

Southampton squad head for National final

● The Southampton Colour Party team with their trophy and medals



SOUTHAMPTON cadets proved to be among the best in the country when they took gold at the Southern Area drill and ceremonial competition.

Having won the District Colour Party competition just weeks earlier, the five cadets from Southampton made the short trip to HMS Sultan in Gosport to take on the best from across the South.

The competition is judged initially on the cadets' standard of dress, and then they are scored on the standards of their personal drill, rifle drill and drill movements with the unit Colour over a set routine.

Competing against seven other teams the Southampton contingent

performed to their highest standards yet, winning first place.

That put them through to the National finals, due to be held at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall at the end of last month, as one of the six best teams in the country.

Unit CO Mark Lampert said: "This result is a testament to the hard work put in during training sessions by the team, along with the unending support and assistance from their trainer, Annabella Pearce.

"This result is well-deserved and all the cadets should be extremely proud of their achievements, and I wish them all the luck for the National Finals."

High-profile role in Jubilee visit

SEA Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets from Waltham Forest unit took part in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee visit at the local town hall.

The cadets formed a kerb guard when the Queen and Prince Philip arrived, lining the pavement from the main gate down to and around the fountain.

Three of the senior cadets, POC Osborne, C/Cpl Hubert and Cdt Zihle, had the privileged role of being VIP Cadets who lined the ramp to where the Royal couple were having their lunch.

C/Cpl Hubert even managed to chat to Prince Philip about her Duke of Edinburgh Award.

There was a second cause for celebration on the same day, as Jamie Shadbolt, the president of TS Acorn, celebrated his 89th birthday.

Mr Shadbolt has been associated with the Waltham Forest unit for more than 50 years, in roles including committee member and chairman.

Cadets arranged a special party for him at the unit, and had a cake made which bore the unit crest.

The president, a decorated World War 2 veteran who commanded a gunboat in action off the Channel Islands, is proud of the unit and always pleased to hear of the cadets' achievements.



● Waltham Forest cadets with the Royal Standard outside the local town hall



● Leading Junior Cadet Henry Clark with Bob the Builder – Henry is on the left...

Juniors are kept busy...

WHAT can you expect from your time in the Junior Sea Cadets?

Henry Clark from Barnsley unit might be able to help you there...

"I have been a junior for almost two years now," said Henry.

"During my time in Junior Sea Cadets I have taken part in lots of events and training. I have had a great time.

"I have visited the coastguards at Bridlington, where we were able to watch the Air-Sea Rescue helicopter training, and the warships in Peasholm Park, Scarborough.

"I have visited Catterick, where I did a simulated parachute jump.

"I have taken part in parades in Barnsley, Eden Camp and York.

"I have been to lots of galas and fairs, helping to raise money for our unit and others.

"I have sold poppies for the British Legion.

"I have met the Captain of the Sea Cadets twice, once in Sheffield and once when he came to our unit.

"I have been on training weekends at Immingham and Grimsby units, and a unit summer camp at Pier Cellars.

"Sadly I have not been to junior summer camp as it has not run while I was a junior.

"The Pier Cellars camp was great – we visited the National Coastwatch station, had a dockyard tour, and a visit to a submarine.

"We visited Britannia Royal Navy College, which was great.

"We went to the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth and learned how to make rope and sailed remote control boats.

"We did raft building and cooked our own dinner. I can't wait to go again as a senior cadet.

"I have taken part in competitions including the District Air Rifle competition, which our team won.

"I have learned lots during my time in Juniors, and now look forward to being a senior cadet and learning lots more."



● The unit chairman at St Albans, Patricia Gosling (pictured), was presented with the Sea Cadet Medal by Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor in recognition of her 31 years of service with the unit. Patricia could have been presented with her medal in London, but preferred to have the ceremony take place at her unit during its Annual Inspection

Police unit pays visit to Harrogate

THE long arm of the law stretched out to junior cadets at Harrogate unit when the North Yorkshire Mobile Police Unit paid a visit.

The youngsters were shown around the unit by Constable Sharon Rawlings – a former Harrogate Sea Cadet – and took part in a question-and-answer session on police activity in the town.

Cadets had the chance to don various items of police clothing, from helmets to stab vests, and they also got to investigate a crime scene staged on the main deck of their unit.

Using their powers of deduction and observation they experienced what being a crime scene investigator is like, and by carefully picking their way over the scene, ‘evidence’ such as torn cloth, footprints and a cigarette butt was gathered and they were able to piece together a theory of what happened.

The unit also made a visit of their own, to see the Mayor of Harrogate, Cllr Les Ellington – a regular visitor to the unit.

Staff and cadets from TS Cleopatra spent the evening at the Mayor’s Parlour, getting a tour of the building and a presentation on the town’s history from the Mace Bearer.

The visit was made possible through the efforts of Lorna Snowden, the Mayor’s secretary.

And Cllr Ellington also had the job of presenting Lt (SCC) Tony Attwood RNR with his second clasp to his long service medal.

After serving in the Merchant Navy as an engineering officer, Tony came back to Harrogate and started work as a director in an engineering company until he retired.

Over the years he has been very active in the unit, serving as Commanding Officer, First Lieutenant and a whole host of other duties.

He is an RYA sailing instructor, showing cadets the ropes at the Ripon Sailing Club, where the unit does its boating.

Apart from his unit duties, he helps the Offshore Team by serving as a relief engineer for the Offshore Power Fleet, and is also on hand as Area Staff Officer Merchant Navy.

Bedford visit Parliament

MEMBERS of Bedford unit were invited to Westminster and the Houses of Parliament by their local MP.

Richard Fuller, member for Bedford and Kempston, arranged for the 35 visitors to tour the House of Commons, House of Lords and the Queen’s Robing Chamber.

He then took them out on to the terrace on the bank of the Thames, while some of the cadets from TS Victorious went down to the chapel and crypt beneath Westminster Hall.

After the tour Mr Fuller and his team held a reception in the Jubilee Hall to top off a memorable day for the unit, which said it appreciates the support it receives from its MP.

Offshore help

A CHEQUE for £600 has been presented to New Romney and District unit by Romney Marsh Rotary Club to help with the cost of sending four cadets to spend a week offshore on board the sail training ship TS Royalist.

The cheque was presented by the current President of the Rotary Club, Spencer Buck, to unit chairman Lt Cdr (SCC) Don Davies RNR and A/CPO Alan Bell.

Presenting the cheque, Mr Buck thanked the cadets for their assistance during the annual Rotary Club Christmas collection.

The Rotary Club has also been able to sponsor two Sea cadets this year to attend a Rotary Youth Leadership course.



● A group of Royal Marines Cadets take part in the Log Run challenge at the Commando Training Centre RM, Lympstone, during the Gibraltar Cup competition

Gibraltar win was against the odds

YOU have to be good to win the Gibraltar Cup, as we reported in last month’s edition.

Eastbourne unit’s Royal Marines Cadet detachment has been reflecting on just how good they had to be to retain the trophy in a tough competition at Lympstone in March, with the majority of their squad being first-timers.

Despite starting with a disadvantage by arriving very late Friday night – three of their team

had to sit GCSEs immediately prior to departure – Eastbourne was the only group to visit all six checkpoints in the navigation exercise on Woodbury Common the following day.

Their fitness levels also stood them in good stead as they posted competitive times for the Log Run, Land Rover Pull and the Assault Course in the Bottom Field.

Their Section Commander, L/Cpl Ryan Hall, also won the Best Section Commander Award.

The Commandant at CTCRM paid credit to all participants, complimenting them on their determination, unselfishness, high standards, and cheerfulness in adversity – the hallmarks of the Commando ethos.

That Eastbourne overcame the same energy-sapping factors of rain, cold, tiredness and high intensity action – the testing of 20 military skills over a 40-hour period – and still triumphed above the other five Areas is testament

to the quality of Eastbourne’s Cadets, the quality of their preparation and training and the dedication of their staff.

Many many hours of hard work and training have been carried out since Christmas and it clearly paid off – to win once is a huge achievement, but to win it a second time is unheard of in this new format, and as only two members of last year’s team competed this time round, the young team’s achievement was even more remarkable.

The Gibraltar Cup was originally awarded to the best Royal Marine Commando Ship’s Detachment serving with the Mediterranean Fleet, and was later presented to the Sea Cadets.

The win comes on top of a very successful year, where the unit as a whole was awarded the Stephenson Trophy for being the best unit in Southern Area, finishing ahead of some 69 other units.

“I would personally like to thank all the staff involved in their training, the patience of the parents running the cadets backward and forward, and not to forget the Eastbourne Fire Brigade who allowed us to ‘pull’ their fire engine,” said the unit’s Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) Stephanie Juniper RNR.

“To see them all beaming and very proudly accepting their award was certainly worth all the effort.”

Top cadet

POC Jessica Burton of Tooting and Balham unit attended the RFCAs awards evening held at Yeomanry House in London to be presented with her award and badges after being selected as the Corps’ Lord Lieutenant of Greater London’s Cadet for 2012-13.

Jessica joined the unit as a junior at the age of ten and has since qualified in first aid, cook/stewarding, sailing, power boating, kayaking, rowing and – most recently – Class 1 in Seamanship (Rigging & Ropework).



● A cadet from Leeds unit undergoes sub-aqua training

Deeper understanding

MEMBERS of Leeds unit took the plunge with Sgt Gary Maindonald, who took cadets to a practical introduction to diving and snorkelling.

Cadets were first introduced to the specialist equipment and then went into the deep end of the pool and gained their first taste and thrill of breathing underwater.

Sgt Maindonald said: “I have always enjoyed sub-aqua diving and am keen to help cadets to develop their skills so that they can gain access to this amazing underwater world.

“We hope to offer more of these events so that

we can help cadets develop a range of marine skills, which will enable them to dive in a safe and enjoyable environment.”

CO Lt (SCC) Chris Bentley RNR said: “The Royal Navy has actively encouraged sub-aqua diving for Servicemen as it is not only good fun but promotes fitness and endurance and provides you with a better understanding of working in a marine environment.

“Whenever possible we like to support such challenging and exciting endeavours and give cadets a taste of something very different – and diving is definitely that.”

Portrush looks to its heritage



AS part of its 70th anniversary celebrations, Portrush unit has undergone a spring clean, including the deck area of TS Duke of York.

And when you have collected more than 100 Royal Navy shields and plaques over the years as gifts (see left), that means a fair bit of elbow grease is required.

Staff and cadets spent a weekend washing, cleaning and tidying up at their headquarters, recently refurbished at a cost of £130,000.

One of the main themes of their publicity drive takes its cue from the national ‘Were you a Sea Cadet?’ initiative, and former members of Portrush are encouraged to contact their old unit on 028 7082 5999, write to Portrush Sea Cadets, 16 Dunluce Avenue, Portrush, Co Antrim BT56 8DW, or visit the website at www.sea-cadets.org/portrush

Unit chairman Ian McCullough said: “The unit is seeking as many past Sea Cadets and adult volunteers to come to Dunluce Avenue, to let the present cadets know what they might have trained for during the years when they were members of Portrush Sea cadets.

“It is vital the young people of today know their unit heritage – the people who founded the unit in 1942 at Portrush Harbour, over the coal sheds, where Portrush Yacht Club is now situated.

“In 1960 the cadets and adult volunteers physically built the building the unit members are using today.”

He added: “The unit has a huge number of exciting ventures to take part in during the summer months; shortly the cadets will be moving to Coleraine Marina to train in their three new Trinity 500 rowing boats and also the two new special power boats.”

Kendal beat Rye at Bisley

THIS year’s Punch shooting competition at the Inter-Service Cadet small bore championship started as a very close event.

The Army Cadet Force took an early lead, but were quickly hauled back by the Air Training Corps, which went on to win by a comfortable margin.

Kendal unit, attending for the first time, and Rye and District unit started well but did not have the team depth to remain in contention towards the end.

The competition for the Service awards saw Kendal beat Rye and District by just one point to win the National Trophy.

The air cadet contest produced a similar result, with 126 (City of Derby) Sqn also beating 1344 (Cardiff) Sqn by one point also.

Which made the Army contest something of a mismatch, as Durham B beat Durham A by a massive two points.

After the excitement of the Punch competition could the Shell competition live up to expectations?

It certainly could – after the Service knock-out stages there was the kind of nail-biting finale observers have come to expect.

In the final stages of the shoot the ACF on the left had two discs left whilst the ATC in the middle and the SCC on the right both had one disc left each.

And it was the ATC who held their nerve and took the honours.

The event was held at the Lord Roberts Centre at Bisley Camp, thanks to the National Small-bore Rifle Association.

Prizes were presented by the Captain Sea Cadets, Capt Mark Windsor.

Report is a winner

THE Square Rigger Club was formed to provide support in terms of manpower, material and funds for the Sea Cadet Corps’ square-rigged sail training brig TS Royalist.

This includes financial support in the form of bursaries for many cadets wishing to spend a week aboard the vessel.

Last year the club inaugurated a President’s Award for the cadet or cadets who received a club bursary, and who in the opinion of the President wrote the best letter of appreciation and thanks for the training undertaken.

The awards for the 2011 season have been announced, and Cdre Roger Parker said: “I am delighted to be able to report that the report of Ordinary Cadet Cead Darragh-Lee was of such standard that the sum of £50 has been awarded to Southwark unit, TS Cossack, to recognise the enthusiastic and interesting report on his experiences.

“He clearly gained a great deal from his offshore training time and we in the Club much enjoyed reading about it.”



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SEA CADETS

Abingdon take the honours

A FINE display of effort and teamwork ensured cadets from Abingdon unit came back from RAF Halton with a clutch of prizes from the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire District annual drill competition.

Abingdon entered drill teams in the Armed Guard, Unarmed Guard and Colour Party categories.

Weeks of polishing kit and hard work pounding the tarmac at the De La Billiere Cadet Centre bore fruit when they claimed first place in the Armed Guard and Unarmed Guard categories, and runners-up spot in the Colour Party category.

As part of the judging process, dress and turnout were also inspected and marked, and Abingdon's AC Chris Ventom was judged to be the Best Dressed Cadet, while the Best Squad Commander award went to Abingdon's Cdt James Diaper.

Success meant more hard work, as the Armed Guard team automatically went forward to represent the unit and District at the Southern Area competition, held at the end of March.

After getting up very early on a beautiful sunny day and driving down to Gosport the squad pulled into HMS Sultan and started getting ready for their dress inspection.

The inspection went well and after a lunch break the team were ready for their display.

They were the last Armed Guard of the day to do their routine and the audience seemed to be impressed by what they saw – the Abingdon contingent were certainly pleased.

And when the results were announced there were squeals of delight and a few tears from cadets and staff when they were awarded second place – believed to be the best result anyone from the District has had at the Area competition for many years.

Winchelsea pair picked

ACs KIERAN Baker and Nathan Cook are the new Mayor's Cadets for Winchelsea.

The Rye and District cadets made their way through appalling weather to attend the mayor Making ceremony at Winchelsea Court Hall, where they were welcomed in to their roles by the new Mayor, Roger Neaves.

Also present was the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Admiral the Lord Boyce.

CPO (SCC) Steven Smith, OIC of Rye unit, said: "I am very proud of our two new Mayor's cadets, putting something back into their community and being good citizens."



● Alexander Smith of Southwark unit receives his award from former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jock Slater Picture: Gerald Sharp Photography

Shipwright bursaries

CADETS from Southwark, Bexley and Thurrock units were on duty in the City of London when they attended the Shipwrights Admissions and Awards Dinner at Fishmongers Hall, on the City side of London Bridge.

Those attending were selected

Midlands units join civic march



MEMBERS from two Sea Cadet units were on duty when 150 sailors from HMS Collingwood exercised the establishment's Freedom of the Borough of Stone in Staffordshire.

The sailors, led by a Royal Marines band, paraded through Stone town centre where cadets from Stoke-on-Trent unit TS Talent – formerly TS Jervis II – and Stafford unit TS Superb lined the route and cheered them on.

A church service in memory of Admiral John Jervis followed the parade.

After the service the cadets were invited to meet Cdre Mike Mansergh, Commanding Officer of HMS Collingwood, and some of the sailors from the Hampshire training establishment.

Pictured (left) is Cdre Mansergh with some of the Stoke-on-Trent cadets at the end of the day.

Picture: Thomas L Eivers

COs step down in the North and South

IT was the end of an era for two units when their Commanding Officers stepped down.

A/Lt (SCC) Kevin Morris RNR handed over the helm at Stonehaven and District after ten years in charge – a decade that has "simply flown by," he said.

Thanking the unit for his send-off, Kevin said: "During the past decade there have been so many highs – far too many to mention – including ten burgees, eight national boating titles, the 50th anniversary celebrations, the Commodore's Cup, the new Colour presentation, the inception of the RYA Training Centre and our affiliation to British Rowing.

"Brilliant memories which I will treasure with me and be proud of for the rest of my life.

"Upon reflection there have been few lows, but the way that this entire unit reacted to the tragic loss of AC Martin Thomson [who died in a road accident in 2005] and to the passing of the most important person in the unit's history, Lt Cdr A G Mitchell, is testament to the family atmosphere and team spirit that exists in TS Carron."

His last word to cadets and staff was: "I simply ask that you continue to do what you have done to date, what you do best and what this unit has done for over 50 years, and that is to work hard, dedicate yourself to the task in hand and bring further accolades to Stoney unit."

"Remember – this is not just any Sea cadet unit, this is Stonehaven Sea Cadet unit. Never forget that."

First Lieutenant S/Lt (SCC) Sean Fraser RNR becomes the new Officer-in-Charge, with A/PO (SCC) Alistair Reid becoming First Lieutenant.

Meanwhile at Gosport unit Lt (SCC) Hilary Gilbert-Jones RNR has also stepped down.

A special parade was staged, with all the cadets and staff in their best uniforms, complete with an armed guard of honour.

Unit patron Rear Admiral Whetstone attended, as did the District Officer, Lt Cdr (SCC) Karen Kristiansen RNR, herself a former CO of the unit.

Also there were parents, friends and supporters, including members of the Unit Management Committee (UMC) led by chairman Lt Cdr Ivor Feist RNR (rtd).

The cadets staged a *This Is Your Life*-style event, which brought fun, laughter and embarrassment in equal measure.

Several cadets paid personal tribute to the CO as a role model.

In her farewell address, the outgoing CO wished the new Officer-in-Charge, PO (SCC) Carlton Strudwick, every success for the future.

Hilary is not turning her back on the Corps, however, as she has taken on the duties of District Staff Training Officer.

Gosport unit has also taken delivery of £17,000 worth of photovoltaic panels supplied and fitted by Sunpath Solar Power.

The UMC looked into the possibilities of utilising the HQ's extensive flat roof to produce electricity for the building and earn some money by selling excess power to the National Grid.

The sell-back element was dropped when the Government changed tariff rules, but UMC member Mike Draper cracked on with the first part of the plan.

The net result was that they could supply and fit enough panels such that the unit should be able to generate enough power for its own needs, with the system paid for from funds raised by the cadets, the Parents and Friends Committee and from central Sea Cadet funds.

The panels were fitted in one day, and the following morning an electrician connected the array to the power supply.

Northampton given Freedom of Borough

NORTHAMPTON and **Wellingborough** unit received the Freedom of the Borough of Northampton, one of the highest accolades any organisation can receive from its home town.

In a ceremony at Northampton Guildhall the Mayor, Cllr Jamie Lane, bestowed the civic honour in recognition of the unit's long service to the people of the town – an honour which received unanimous endorsement from across the council.

The Freedom Citation was presented to the youngest Junior Cadet, who is at the age of ten the youngest member of the unit.

Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Chris Read RNR said: "Northampton Borough has supported the Sea Cadets in Northampton since its formation in 1942.

"The granting of the Freedom of the Borough just shows how the Sea Cadet unit is supported by the local community, and this stands the organisation in good stead for a stable future for many years to come."

The following day more than 100 Sea Cadets from the unit were joined by cadets and volunteers from other local units to exercise the right to march through the street, drums beating, bayonets fixed and colours flying as part of the annual HMS Laforey Parade, which commemorates the loss of the town's adopted warship in

World War 2 – 158 men died when the destroyer was torpedoed and sank on March 30 1944.

Publicly presenting the Freedom, the Mayor said he was impressed by the turnout and conduct of the parade as the cadets undertook their 'salute to the borough'.

The parade marked the end of Lt Read's nine-year period of command, but as he moved on to take up the role of District Officer, he said that he knew he was leaving TS Laforey in very capable hands, because the new CO is another Lt (SCC) Read RNR – Chris's wife Clare.

During the same week the unit had the honour of hosting the Duke of York (pictured right).

Prince Andrew, Admiral of the Sea Cadets, dropped in to speak to members of TS Laforey and watch cadets demonstrate the skills they have learned during their time with the Corps.

The unit flew the Royal Standard from its mainmast for



the first time as the Duke unveiled a plaque to mark his visit.

He then presented BTEC Public Services Diplomas to POCs Lara Jolley and Jake Collins, achieved through the Corps.

Planning permission has been granted for Northampton to

extend their buildings, and the unit has already raised more than £30,000 for the project, thanks to the support of West Northants Development Corporation and other supporters.

It is hoped work will begin this year.

Training pays off

IT TAKES a fair bit of training to make the step up from civilian trainer to Petty Officer in the Corps.

And it is nice to have that training validated in the 'real world' – to know that the skills you are taught are genuine and make a difference.

PO (SCC) Dave Horsman found himself in that position just weeks ago.

"Adult Instructors, when joining the Sea Cadets, go through quite a lot to become a Petty Officer," said Dave, a member of Kendal unit.

"These mandatory courses are done mostly over weekends."

Dave explained that the normal course of events sees a candidate complete six months as a CI (Civilian Instructor), then become an Acting PO until the following modules have been completed:

- Adult induction;
- Drill;
- Seamanship;
- Youth Development;
- Instructional methods;
- First aid;
- Leadership.

"I did my first aid in about September 2011, and when you actually do the course you think to yourself that you will never need to use the skills in real life," said Dave.

"How wrong was I?"

"Six weeks ago a chap from the next industrial unit ran into my office and said 'Does anyone know first aid?'"

"I went next door thinking of a cut finger or something trivial.

"Upon arriving and seeing the situation I had to think quickly on what to do.

"The owner was slumped down next to a circular saw with blood everywhere – all over the circular saw and floor.

"I pulled him away from danger and started first aid.

"I told the owner's employee to phone the ambulance.

"By the time the ambulance arrived I had halted the bleeding to a badly-gashed arm, which looked like it was something out of a horror movie.

"He has recovered well and is back at work.

"If I had not done the first aid course I might have done things differently and the outcome might have been worse."

On a happier note, cadets from Kendal managed to get to see HMS Liverpool when the veteran destroyer called in at her namesake city on her farewell tour – and it stirred some memories for Dave.

"It was a very emotional return to HMS Liverpool for me as I was a LWEM(R) on board in 1983-84," he said.

"The ship seemed smaller inside than I remember..."

The senior rate said the cadets were very grateful to Lt Cdr Andy Canale, the ship's Executive Officer, and guide CPO Levison for the two-hour tour, and to the ship's company for their hospitality.



● PO (SCC) Dave Horsman

How we STUFT the Junta

THE Falklands war could not have been waged without merchant ships.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary was, as usual, key to giving the fleet the reach to project power half a world away, writes *Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford*.

The contribution of civilian-owned shipping was also vital. As Sir Lawrence Freedman, the official historian, put it: "The sealift was...remarkable... heavily-dependent upon the ability to take up ships from trade (STUFT).

"On 45 merchant ships were carried 9,000 personnel, 100,000 tons of freight and 95 aircraft to the South Atlantic; ships from over 30 companies were used, and the process of acquisition and conversion had all passed remarkably smoothly."

I have quoted the above because the latest study of merchant shipping in the war, **They Couldn't Have Done it Without Us: The Merchant Navy in the Falklands War** (Seafarer, £9.95 ISBN 978-1-906266-23-3) by John Johnson-Allen, asserts that the value of STUFT was downplayed in Sir Lawrence's work.

This is far from the case. Indeed it would be impossible to write a history of this most maritime of conflicts without paying due regard to the contribution of the wide variety of merchant ships mobilised for war in 1982.

Johnson-Allen examines the story of a number of ships, each account usually based on the testimony of personnel on board each vessel. The ships covered are the passenger liners Canberra and Uganda, the container ships Atlantic Conveyor and Atlantic Causeway, the tankers British Trent, British Tay and Eburna, the ferries Europic Ferry and St Edmund, the repair ship Stena Inspector and the tugs Yorkshireman, Irishman and Salvageman plus RFAs Olmeda

THE GROVE REVIEW

and Sir Lancelot and the British Antarctic Survey Ship Bransfield.

The accounts bring out interesting points that have been missed in earlier works, such as the culture clashes between the merchant seamen and the armed services. Captain Scott-Masson of Canberra was "singularly unimpressed" with HMS Fearless and had to use P&O resources to buy beer for the ship at Ascension as the RAF had "half-inched our supply". There was also disagreement over which time zone to use. Eventually Canberra made a unilateral decision to run the ship by gradually altering the clocks rather than going immediately on to GMT at Ascension. "Sometimes I despair of the Navy and the Military," Scott-Masson wrote.

The liner captain was, however, impressed overall by the quality of the Royal Marines and paratroopers that made up his original load.

When he picked up 5 Brigade from Queen Elizabeth 2 the situation was different. He found the Guards a "funny lot" who were not prepared for a real combat situation. The master was a shrewd judge. The stage was being set for the needless Sir Galahad tragedy.

Merchant ships often had to exchange foreign crew members for British seamen from the 'pool' of such personnel. At the time there were quite a few available as the shipping market was depressed.

The mobilisation of such personnel created some tensions as officers had to lose men they

knew for unknown quantities. The non-British seamen seem often to have been only too willing to continue, especially given the generous war rates of pay on offer, a 150 per cent increase once the ship was beyond seven degrees south.

There were problems with certain countries, notably India, forbidding their nationals to assist the British war effort. This posed particular problems for P&O, who still used large numbers of Indians. The most interesting account by Maurice Onslow, then head of P&O's Hotel Services Department, is very enlightening in explaining how such difficulties were overcome.

They were mitigated in the hospital ship Uganda by her non-combatant status under the Geneva convention which allowed the continued use of Calcutta Moslem personnel – after some persuasion and after their special food requirements (not without some difficulty) had been assured.

The period was one of uneasy industrial relations and, in the circumstances, it was quite an achievement that the use of STUFT went as well as it did.

Particularly interesting in this regard is the story of the Sealink Hook of Holland ferry St Edmund that was a late arrival but stayed a long time, largely in the accommodation ship role. Perhaps understandably, the first relief crew sent down to the ship was far from happy. The seamen had been planning to strike before the war and they proved most difficult. A third crew finally sailed

the ship home in February 1983 to an uncertain future, as the Hook of Holland route was to be abandoned. St Edmund herself was taken over by the MOD as a troopship and renamed Keren for future Falklands use.

STUFT filled gaps that it was deemed necessary should remain filled after the conflict. Stena Inspector proved so useful as a repair ship that she serves to this day as RFA Diligence. It was also interesting to see how Atlantic Causeway proved the role of primary casualty receiving ship, now one role performed by RFA Argus, another STUFT container ship of the Falklands war, Contender Bezant.

The author generally does a competent job of integrating his sources but he ought to have done more to correct errors. The most important of these is the persistent misconception, which unfortunately the author seems to share, that the Argentines hit the LSLs at Fitzroy with Exocet missiles. In fact the damage was done with normal bombs dropped by Argentine Air Force Skyhawks.

In a concluding chapter the author discusses the interesting question of how far the vital contribution made by merchant ships in the Falklands war could be replicated today in another expeditionary operation. The conclusion is rather pessimistic, reinforced by the remark on the back cover by the historian of the merchant fleet, Richard Woodman, that the Falklands was a "last hurrah for a merchant Navy that we no longer have."

This statement needs qualification, however. It is certainly true for seamen. As Mr Johnson-Allen points out there are now only 14,000 British merchant seafarers of all ranks compared to 30,000 ratings alone at the beginning of the 1980s. Yet in terms of ships the situation is much better. John Prescott's tonnage tax

(introduced at the suggestion of shipping magnate Lord Sterling) has wrought something of a miracle in increasing the numbers of ships flying the red ensign.

Johnson-Allen is agnostic as to whether this plethora of ships could be converted into STUFT capability at short notice. Given that many of the foreign nationals were reluctant to leave their ships at the outset of hostilities in 1982, manning these ships in a crisis might not necessarily be that difficult.

The main problem inhibiting expeditionary capability at the moment is the Royal Navy's lack of aircraft carriers.

Certainly Operation Corporate in 1982 could not have been carried out without the contribution of merchant ships and seamen and it is good that it has been recognised in this anniversary year by the new book. Coverage is, however, rather limited.

The role of the RFA has been covered elsewhere in Puddefoot's *No Sea Too Rough*, and I wonder if it might have been better to have found at least one or two more examples of important notable civilian-owned ships, Norland for example, rather than include any RFAs.

The mercantile contribution to the conflict was covered more comprehensively in Captain Roger Villar's *Merchant Ships at War* which came out in 1984 and which is still available at reasonable prices on the internet. This older book remains the standard work on the subject but the new volume, which takes full advantage of greater historical distance from the events, is a vital and informative supplement.

They Couldn't Have Done it Without Us is a must for all interested in the Falklands War. There is absolutely no excuse for not acquiring it. At £9.95 it is quite remarkable value.



Ranks for the memories

AS WE suspected last month, the (potential) introduction of new working rig to the Fleet prompted a few comments (in our letters' pages and our Facebook site).

It also means a minor update will be required to E C Coleman's **Rank and Rate**, the definitive illustrated guide to the myriad insignia worn by Royal Navy and Royal Marines officers and ratings for the past 150 years.

For although we commented that the day uniform of matelots hasn't fundamentally changed in decades, the badges of rank and rate certainly have – so much so that they fill two volumes.

The first (ISBN 978-1-84797-1388) deals with the officer corps, the second (ISBN 978-1-84797-308-5) deals with ratings, the WRNS, Royal Marines, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service and Auxiliaries. Both, published by Crowood Press, run to just under 100 pages and cost £19.95 each.

The Admiralty began standardising officers' uniforms in 1856 – some three decades after the first badges for ratings – setting the benchmark for many other navies around the world.

Many of the changes to those insignia were brought about by technology – purple stripes for engineer officers, blue for ordnance – while wings were introduced for pilots.

The wings emblem was based on a lady's brooch which may, or may not, have originated in Berlin; it's not a million miles away from the badge subsequently worn by the Luftwaffe – although Capt Murray Sueter, one of the pioneers of naval aviation, insisted it was inspired by a French Imperial eagle...

In many cases, ratings' badges have changed remarkably little – a petty officer or leading hand of 2012 would instantly recognise their forebears from the 1850s.

Indeed, as the author points out: "A modern nuclear-age rating could be wearing a badge that might have been seen on the arm of an early 19th-Century petty officer."

It's a shame that quite a few of the photos have reproduced rather 'blockily', a not uncommon occurrence in the age of digital images and publishing, sadly.

That slight quibble aside, these two volumes are an essential reference guide for serious students of the past 150 years of the RN. Producers of TV dramas and films about the RN take note; there's now no excuse for the wrong uniform.

All we need now is someone to produce a definitive guide to all the various branches and trades...

Small ships, big influence

FOR 40 years from 1953, 119 Ton or Coniston (the first named) class mine counter-measures vessels (MCMVs) served the Royal Navy, a number of Commonwealth navies, the Armada Argentina and the Irish Navy with distinction in peace, conflict and war.

Generations of young naval officers 'cut their teeth' in them and, for many future senior officers, they were their first and often most cherished commands, writes *Cdr Rob Scott of the Directorate of Naval Personnel*.

Thousands of sailors served in them; many grew to love them for their informality, camaraderie and the opportunity to develop professionally as a large 'cog' in a very small 'wheel'.

Some even hated them; as the Prince of Wales (a former Commanding Officer of HMS Bronington) says in his foreword, they had a "well-deserved reputation for rolling, even on wet grass!"

They were also among the last ships in the Royal Navy to have open bridges, although these gradually became enclosed during subsequent refits; fine in the Mediterranean or Tropics but not so fine off the coast of Scotland in winter.

Former Ton sailors and others less fortunate to have served in these splendid little ships will enjoy **Last of the Wooden Walls – An Illustrated History of the Ton Class Minesweepers and Minehunters** (Halsgrove, £24.99 ISBN 978-0-85704-127-2) and its companion volume **Jack of All Trades – Operational Records of Ton Class Minesweepers and Minehunters** (Ton Class Association, £9.99 ISBN 978-0-9570588-04).

Last of the Wooden Walls is edited by Rob Hoole whose 32 years as a Royal Navy minewarfare and clearance diving officer included service in HM Ships Laleston and Wilton, as staff operations officer of 3rd MCM Squadron and as the first commanding officer of HMS Berkeley, one of the Hunt-class successors to the Tons. Rob is keen to point out, however, that the book was very much a 'team effort'.

Jack of All Trades is edited by Peter

Down, honorary secretary of the Ton-class Association (TCA) and the publication of both books coincides with the 25th anniversary of the formation of that association.

The TCA now boasts 1,300 members from the Royal Navy and other navies across the globe with members in UK, USA, Europe, South Africa, South America, the Far East and Australia.

The Ton-class were first conceived in 1947 to counter the threat of mines laid in the approaches to ports and harbours for which large steel-hulled minesweepers – such as the well-known Algerine-class – were unsuitable.

With many such mines detonated by a ship's magnetic signature, the need to reduce this in the minesweepers themselves became paramount. Consequently it was decided on a wooden construction – double diagonal mahogany on an aluminium frame – and so the 'wooden-walled' ship was reborn; like their sailing predecessors, some of the hulls were even protected by copper sheathing!

One of the exceptions was HMS Wilton, a late addition completed in 1973 and the first warship in the world to be constructed entirely of Glass Reinforced Plastic.

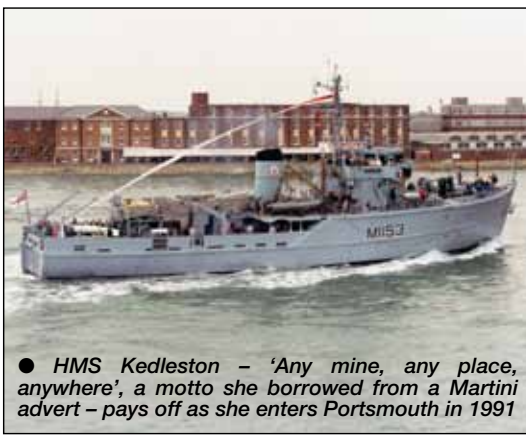
Originally called the Insect-class, it was fortunately decided to rename the class after villages in the UK ending '-ton'.

This not only fostered an enduring affiliation with the villages chosen but also avoided the inevitable amusement, if not indignity, of sailors sporting a cap tally with, for example, the name HMS Golden Cockchafer emblazoned thereupon.

Initially termed coastal minesweepers, or CMS for short, the first minehunter variant – HMS Kirkliston – was converted in 1964 with the introduction into service of Type 193 Sonar.

More would follow while other vessels were converted into coastal survey vessels Myrmidon and Mermaid, and a number were redesignated patrol vessels, particularly for service in Hong Kong.

Others were assigned to the Royal Naval



● HMS Kedleston – 'Any mine, any place, anywhere', a motto she borrowed from a Martini advert – pays off as she enters Portsmouth in 1991

Volunteer Reserve (which merged with and became the Royal Naval Reserve in 1958) with 12, reducing to 11, Tons forming the 10th Mine Countermeasures Squadron. Some took a river or other name associated with the RNR Sea Training Centre to which they were tendered; they subsequently reverted to standard Ton nomenclature in 1976.

The loss of HMS Fittleton following a collision with the frigate HMS Mermaid and the death of 12 reservists on September 20 1976 became one of the most tragic peacetime incidents in the annals of the Service.

With an initial cost of £252,126 per unit, the Ton-class represented excellent value for money and were produced in sufficient numbers to exert their influence in most theatres of operation worldwide.

Up to two squadrons were based in Malta from 1955 to support patrols off Cyprus and included forays to Haifa in the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli war and to Aden, together with providing support to the Suez operation in 1956, augmented by additional Tons from UK.

Subsequent mine clearance operations were to persist in the approaches to Suez and in the canal itself over the next two and a half decades.

Tons operating from Hong Kong and Singapore played a major role in the Indonesian Confrontation 1962-66, where their capacity to operate close inshore, supporting and resupplying Royal Marines and Army units ashore, made a vital contribution and several members of their

ships' companies were decorated as a result.

Further vessels were based in the Gulf from 1961 until 1971 when British forces finally withdrew (OK, we went back again!) and Operation Grenada saw many Tons engaged in patrols off the coast of Northern Ireland during the period 1970-93. In addition, these tough little ships were the mainstay of the Fishery Protection Squadron until eventually replaced incrementally by custom-built offshore patrol vessels.

The books contain an abundance of technical information especially regarding the Mirlees diesels that were later replaced by the well-known Napier Deltic engines and, of course, the various minesweeping and minehunting equipments installed.

At 360 tons (440 full load), 153ft length overall with a 27.7ft beam and draught of 8.2ft, the Tons were one of the smallest warships to have an (albeit limited) ocean-going capability.

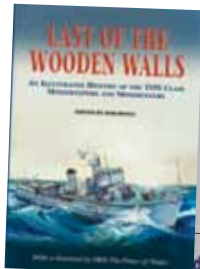
Their bunker capacity for 45 tons of Dieso (usually only filled to 95 per cent) gave them a range of 2,000 nautical miles at 10kts but 15.3 tons of fresh water for a ship's company of 29-38 (depending on the ship's role) would only last a week without rationing being imposed.

Most ships were fitted with a single 40/60mm Bofors and twin 20mm Oerlikon guns plus General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMGs) and other small arms. This made them into formidable little warships and very much the 'Jack of all trades' of the Fleet they became.

So if you served in a Ton or, like me, you just went to sea in them occasionally – eg HMS Walkerton as the BRNC Dartmouth tender – or you simply enjoy tales of ships and the sea, then buy *The Last of the Wooden Walls*. You won't be disappointed.

If you want to know more about individual vessels, then buy *Jack of All Trades* as well. I particularly liked the postscript to the latter:

Minesweeping is a science of vague assumptions, based on debatable figures, taken from inconclusive experiments, performed with instruments of problematic accuracy, by persons of doubtful reliability and questionable mentality.



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Peter eyes up world title

BEIJING Olympic gold medallist and London 2012 rowing hopeful Lt Peter Reed has been confirmed as part of the men's coxless four for the opening World Cup regatta in Belgrade on May 4.

The 30-year-old, a RN Engineering Training Manager, has been selected to represent Team GB as part of the boat class in which he won a gold in China four years ago.

Joining him will be Andy Triggs Hodge – his partner from rowing as a pair – and also Alex Gregory with the final seat to be decided between Tom James and Alex Partridge.

The final four will be joining the country's blue riband boat for the second time in which the likes of Sir Steve Redgrave, Sir Matthew Pinsent and James Cracknell helped Britain win gold at the last three Olympics.

"I'm very very excited about being back in the coxless four," said Peter.

"I think it's a very different boat to the pair and a transition that we can make easily. Personally I've always thought my body and my physiology suit a four more than a pair and there's a lot that I can offer at that event.

"From the World Cup in Belgrade we then have to put the cherry on the icing and hope we are also the team picked for the Olympics. It would be a great opportunity to defend our titles that we won in 2008 in Beijing and there is a lot of excitement and a lot of enthusiasm at the moment – the boat is really buzzing."

The announcement on the GB rowing team for the World Cup gives a vital indicator as to who the Olympic squad will be – with the official announcement on June 6.

"We began our Olympic training four years ago," Peter said. "Our very specialist training starts now – we've been selected for the cup and we need to do the finishing touches – so the speed work is what we will be working on. I think we will be very fast this year."

As well as a strong team put forward from Team GB, the four will be looking out for the recently-formed Australian team and the German boat, with the expectation that the Italians or Greeks will also pull out all the stops.

Paddle power on the river

THE RAF hosted a tri-Service 'spring paddlefest' at their watersports centre in Danesfield, near Marlow.

With a wealth of boats available and open access to the Thames it was an excellent opportunity for novice and experienced kayakers to develop their skills in a wide variety of craft.

As well as sprint/marathon craft, wild-water racers and Canadian canoes, particularly popular was the paddleboard – an excellent test of balance, strength and skill.

Unfortunately due to the unseasonably low water levels the planned freestyle competition was re-scheduled for later in the year.

The festival also afforded the chance for personnel to gain British Canoe Union (BCU) qualifications to progress on to awards in the coaching scheme. In total 30 Service personnel attended with five gaining the BCU 2nd canoe and kayak award.

Six RN paddlers made the most of the clement spring weather, including new members from Portsmouth and Culdrose. Thanks go to Flt Lt Keith Hughesman and POAET Leigh Chapman (Culdrose) for organising the event and RN attendance respectively.

The next competition is the Inter-Service sprint/marathon championships (June 8-10) in Nottingham. More details at www.rnka.co.uk.

Another big hit

IF WE could do sound effects, this one would go 'thwack'.

LAET 'Ali' Barbour lamps Nelson's ETME Bain during another big night for HMS Sultan's boxers.

Ali lost this clash but his fellow pugilists added the RN Cup to the Eastern Region Championships and Sultan-Collingwood title.

In a gripping finals night at Collingwood, Sultan and 45 Cdo were level on 11 points, writes PO(PT) Daz 'The Hatchet' Hoare.

First up for Sultan was ETME 'Cookie' Cooke boxing FPGRM's AB Kitson. The bout started really badly for Cooke who was knocked down within 30 seconds – but with true courage he got up, wiped himself down, smiled and started to make amends.

He got back into the bout, landing some great shots of his own. He was warned by his corner about his front hand being low – which is where Kitson was scoring his points. Cooke kept trying to raise his game with some combinations. In the end it went to the score cards where Kitson was named winner.

Next up for the Gosport establishment was team captain LAET Connell. This was Connell's moment to step into the limelight and win a title he so deserved.

He knocked his opponent, Weaver from FPGRM, down in the first round with a fantastic left/right hook, earning his opponent a standing eight count.

Connell went into attack mode with switch of attacks to head and body landing five-six punch combinations that had his opponent hanging on.

In the second round there was no let-up with Connell scoring with some fantastic boxing. In the third, it was again one-way traffic with Connell scoring with some great ring craft.

To the scorecards and the new welterweight champion was the Sultan man; what a fantastic performance from a quality boxer who will go a long way.

While all this was happening, a 45 Cdo boxer had lost just before the break to put HMS Sultan 12-11 up on the night.

After the interval Sultan put their last boxer into the ring: LAET 'Ali' Barbour, taking on an ex-Sultan fighter in ETME Bain, now boxing for Nelson.

While across the water in Gosport, Bain had three wins via the quick route so a game plan was put in force: move to both sides, always making Bain reposition himself to throw attacks.

This worked well with Bain struggling to catch up with Barbour, who in turn was having some luck catching the Nelson man by surprise.

In the second round Bain caught up with

Barbour a few times but again Barbour was moving off and throwing shots.

It was the same story in the final round, with Bain winning on points. This was a brilliant effort by Barbour who fought in his first bout and has so much to look forward to.

The Royal Marines in the meantime had pegged it back to 12-12 and so Sultan and 45 Cdo were declared joint champions.

For Sultan, this has been a fantastic effort which started in June 2011 with money for more equipment from the Sports Lottery and Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

A goal was set pre-season to put Sultan's boxing squad on the map.

Aside from adding to the establishment's trophy cabinet, by taking part in local civilian shows and events the fighters have helped to raise more than £1,200 for charity.

Indeed fresh from the big night at Collingwood, two Sultan fighters were in the ring again at Sarisbury Green, near Fareham, where 'Cookie' Cooke and Sub Lt Houghton were boxers 14 and 16 on a night of 17 bouts.

The officer, in only his third bout, came up against another rookie who was fighting publicly for the fifth time.

The civilian fighter came storming out swinging the leather, catching Houghton a few times to take the first round.

Words of advice to the junior officer during the minute's rest saw him get back into the bout, and on several occasions he caught his opponent.

Standing his ground Houghton started to box well until a wild swing caught him on the mouth resulting in the referee having to stop the bout due to the injury sustained.

Nevertheless, the officer is coming on in leaps and bounds and will come back from this injury a lot stronger and wiser.

As for Cookie, he began his fourth fight looking for his first win – and started well, landing some good shots, but as soon as they hit he received some counter punches.

The first round lasted 2m 30s – an oversight on the timekeeper's part – and Cooke's opponent Hewitt just nipped the opener.

In the second, Cooke got right back into the bout landing some great combinations and a brilliant corkscrew uppercut to take the round.

In the final round, the Sultan man really put the pressure on with high-intensity work; he was a 'man on a mission', landing ten blows – unanswered.

Cooke continued to land clear shots and was very close in stopping his opponent only for the bell to sound.

The coaches along with Cooke were convinced he had won – only to hear the words "Majority decision Hewitt in the Red corner".

Everyone was totally amazed by the decision, but Cooke is growing used to it, having had a couple of bad decisions go against him.

Cookie is getting better each time he steps into the ring and won't have to wait long to get the win he deserves.

Picture: Keith Woodland, HMS Collingwood



Success for Smudge as he turns pro

AFTER four years and more than 30 bouts to his name boxer LPT Gareth 'Smudge' Smith (BRNC) took the big step and turned professional.

The venue for Smudge's professional debut was Plymouth Guildhall, his opponent Darren Pryce from Newport in Wales – a tough first rival with five pro fights behind him.

Despite the most comprehensive training the leading hand had ever completed before a fight at Plymouth's Cosmo Gym and the support of his Dartmouth shipmates, Smudge – pictured above courtesy of AI Media with his back to the camera – says his first professional bout was a daunting prospect.

"I felt naked in the ring without my vest and head guard on so it was a totally different feeling and unnatural to begin with," he adds.

"However, I settled in to the fight and thoughts of amateur boxing were replaced with a new way of looking at boxing.

"When my arm was raised at the end of the fight I felt on top of the world and all my doubts of why I had been training so hard were answered and I am happy that

moving into the elite of boxing is the right step for me."

With one fight, one win under his belt, he'll shortly be stepping into the ring again in Hull against respected fighter Terry Broadbent. Smudge's opponent comes to the ring with an impressive record of five fights, four wins and two knockouts.

Says the LPT: "The RN has always instilled into me to challenge myself throughout my career as a PTI – I thought it was only natural for me after such a successful time with the RN boxing team to progress to the professional ranks.

"I felt that I was a good enough standard to move in to the professional world and did not want to look back on my boxing career and have any regrets."

"I cannot thank the RN enough for what they have done for me and RN boxing will always have a big place in my heart.

"I look forward to continuing to promote the Royal Navy and its ability to produce elite athletes throughout my professional boxing career and continue to enjoy serving my country at the same time."



Special delivery for Exe-men

THIS is typically Royal Marines.

You could have four brand-new special kayaks delivered to your base, in this case CTCRM Lympstone.

Or you could pick them up from the supplier then paddle them to base...

Yup, the commandos chose the latter as the boats were handed over to CTCRM Sea Angling Association.

A dozen members of Lympstone's Hunter Company – the specialist rehabilitation company for commando-hopefuls which helps recruits back to full fitness – picked up the sit-on-top fishing kayaks from AS Watersports at Haven Banks then paddled the craft to Exmouth, some 11 miles away.

The journey took them down the Exeter Canal, then into the River Exe, with a break at the half-way point... which just happened to be the Turf Lock Inn, whose staff provided free soup and juice to sustain the kayakers.

Just in case anything untoward happened (it didn't) the Hunter men were accompanied on their 11-mile paddle by a safety boat from Royal Marine Water Activity Centre at Exmouth, just down the road from the commando training centre...

...which is where the craft were successfully delivered. The boats, paddles, flotation devices, trolleys and fishing kit are now ready for hire at the centre for those associated with Lympstone.

Picture: LA(Phot) Rhys O'Leary, CTCRM



● *LS(CIS) Smalley eyes up a shot in goal for the General Service against the FAA at the RN Cup in Gosport* Picture: LA(Phot) Darby Allen

RLC frozen out

IT'S been a busy and very successful couple of months for the RN Ice Hockey Association and started with a well-worked and deserved win over the Royal Logistic Corps in an away game at Bracknell ice rink.

As usual for RN ice hockey, the game faced off at 11pm – and members of the RNIHA had travelled from Cudrose, Plymouth and Portsmouth to take part, *writes Lt Adam Lappin*.

The Navy were expecting a tight game as both the RNIHA and the RLC had turned up with three full lines of players (15 skaters) and the RN had not had this many players at a fixture for some months.

The game started at a very fast pace and both teams were unable to breach the other's defences.

The first period saw the Navy move the puck around well and cycle it around the RLC goal in the hope that a hole would appear for the shot on goal.

After the RLC play broke down in the neutral zone, the RN took advantage and advanced on to the RLC goal. With pin-point passing from Cpl J Underwood (Raleigh) and Lt Lappin (Nelson), the RLC keeper was left out of position and Mne S Rowlands (40 Cdo) shot the puck past the stranded net minder with just under four minutes played.

This was followed two minutes later by a well-worked move in the attacking zone between Mne B Hubbs (40 Cdo) and LAET S Tunnard (820 NAS) who produced a reverse pass behind the net to leave Cave with enough space to beat the RLC net minder on his glove side into the roof of the net.

The majority of the play in the first period was directed at the RLC goal but the RN goalie, AB 'Blacky' Blackshaw (MCM2) still had work to do and saved all the shots fired at him. The period ended with the RN leading 2-0.

The second period saw the RN team remain a cohesive unit and the transitional play and line changes were impeccable (for a change!) and enabled the team to perform some fairly accurate passing both across and up the ice.

With the five-minute mark in this period approaching, Lt M Allinson (MCM1) – or Action Man as he is known due to his chiselled features – knocked one of the RLC forwards off the puck and played a pass right in to the path of Cave who fired a shot on to the RLC goalie.

This shot was blocked well by the net minder but the rebound fell kindly for Mne Hubbs who had followed the shot and put the puck in the back of the net for the Navy's third of the game.

The period continued with the same high intensity from the RN and good play from Rowlands and Blackshaw kept the pressure on the Pongos but they managed to keep the puck in the neutral zone and, more importantly, away from the RLC goal.

After a frustrating few minutes for the RN forwards, the breakthrough came when LAET Tunnard uncharacteristically found himself in a good scoring position and was on the receiving end of some good passing from Lappin, Cave and Underwood.

Tunnard kept his composure and from four yards out managed to keep his shot on target and score a rare goal for the Navy. This prompted a response from the RLC bench and it is not the response that goalkeepers like to see. With his morale now leaving Bracknell on a flatbed truck, the RLC replaced their starting net minder who would now watch the rest of the game from the comfort of his own bench. The period finished with the RN 4-0 up.

The third period saw the new RLC keeper add some cement to the cracks in their defence (must be serving in the Pioneer Corps...) and spurred their forwards into action with a resurgence towards the RN goal.

Again Blacky was up to the task and showed that his fledgling career as the RNIHA net minder would not be short-lived.

The period had reached stalemate and tempers were starting to fray on the RLC bench with the frustration of being four goals down.

With no hope of a win, the RLC started to get a little bit chippy on the ice and tried to increase the physical aspect of the game in the hopes that the RN would make a mistake and lose their self-discipline.

It was not to be and with two minutes to go, Underwood sealed the win with a fine shot from just inside the blue line, beating the RLC keeper just underneath his blocker.

The game finished 5-0 to the RN and even though the activity around the Navy goal was not particularly intense, this does not detract that Blacky had earned himself a shutout and pulled off some good stops in the process.

As well as B games against teams from Southampton University and the Solent Spartans, there's also been the annual RN Cup; sides from the RN (General Service), RM and FAA met at Gosport Ice Rink for a full day of hockey to decide who would leave the rink with the coveted trophy.

Teams played two 20-minute periods and players of mixed ability were able to compete side-by-side. The tournament also featured hardest shot, accuracy, fastest skater and shootout contests.

After a hard day on the ice, the tired legs and bruised bodies of the RNIHA players made their way to the Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth for the awards night.

RN ice hockey colours were presented to Sgt J Throop (TS Manadon) and AB M Dugard (Kent) for Inter-Service selection in 2011; first goal awards to POET P Shannon (Edinburgh), LET C Heywood (Edinburgh) and AB D Lloyd (PORFLOT); skills competition winners were LET Heywood (accuracy), Mne Hubbs (shootout), Kev Cave (fastest skater) and the overall best goalie for the RN Cup going to AB Blackshaw. The RN Cup itself was won for a third consecutive year by the Royal Marines.

Heron triumph in cider decider

THE Navy Cup final had the added spice of a local derby this year, with 40 Commando Royal Marines going head-to-head with HMS Heron.

And there was also the classic bootnecks vs matelots rivalry as the commandos from Taunton took on the airmen of Yeovilton on neutral ground – HMS Temeraire, the RN School of Physical Training in Portsmouth.

40 Cdo RM were making their debut in the final, and the Marines' captain Ed Middleton almost gave them a dream start, his goal-bound header being cleared off the Heron line early in the match.

But the Royals did not have to wait long before making their mark, with Stu Gould breaking clear and smashing in the opening goal.

A controversial decision brought the sailors back into the contest when the Marines' keeper failed to make much distance with his attempt to punch the ball clear and Robert Rae's header was adjudged to have crossed the line – much to the sailors' delight and the bootnecks' annoyance.

Heron were now in the ascendancy, and capitalised when Tom Ardley's cross was met by Craig Seamark, who slotted home to give his side a 2-1 lead at the break.

The Commandos began the second half strongly, and an early volley bounced off the crossbar into the waiting arms of Frosty Frost, the Heron keeper.

Again 40 Cdo followed up their near-miss with a goal, with man of the match Ed Middleton equalising to set up a tense finale.

But the outcome of the contest hinged on a reckless challenge by Richie Garman of 40 Cdo, which resulted in the young left back being red-carded as the game entered the final ten minutes.

And as he sat on the sidelines, Richie watched his team succumb to a late, fatal blow when Jamie Turnball smashed home the winner for the airmen three minutes from the final whistle.

This sweet strike started the celebrations for Heron, who held on to take their sixth title, though the first since 2007.

Leading Air Engineering Technician Stuart Isaksen, HMS Heron's captain, said: "We got the third goal and then just closed the game down for the last three minutes."

"They were down to ten men and we didn't look like losing from then."

The champagne – or possibly cider – flowed as Heron won the Somerset bragging rights over their rivals from 20 miles up the road.

RN Vets vs RAF Vets

A very strong Vets team hosted their RAF counterparts at Burnaby Road.

Conditions were not ideal, with very high winds and a slippery surface for the players to contend with.

The Navy had the better of the opening exchanges but failed to turn possession into goals; in the tenth minute a free kick from Lt Fraser Quirke (Temeraire) went just wide of the post.

The RAF were settling into the game now and in the 18th minute it took a good save by Mick Heath (ex-RM), making his debut in the RN goal, to keep the scores level. Unfortunately, this was Mick's final contribution as he dislocated two fingers moments later.

Cpl Shaun Foster RM moved from the centre of defence to take over in goal and the experienced WO1 Marty Wallace (Sultan) came off the bench to play centre-half.

The Navy went close on two occasions, first Steve Riley miss-



● *Heron Captain Stuart Isaksen side steps a Royal Marine defender on the way to the Yeovilton side's Navy Cup triumph at Burnaby Road* Picture: LA(Phot) Maxine Davies, FRPU East



ONSIDE with Lt Cdr Neil Hordwood, RNFA

hit a left-foot shot wide, then, after a great individual run, Sgt Ritchie Hope RM blasted his shot over the bar. Half time 0-0.

In the opening minutes of the second period, the Navy started to turn the screw on the visitors' defence.

Great interplay between CPOPT's Steve O'Neil (Neptune) and captain Paul Willetts (Collingwood) laid on a golden opportunity for Kevin Maddocks whose shot went over the bar.

In the 54th Quirke got to the by-line pulled the ball back for O'Neil to volley home the first goal for the RN Vets.

However, within a minute, from a goalmouth scramble Sgt Graham Rose equalised for the RAF.

Nine minutes later the RN regained the lead when O'Neil set up Quirke to finish from close range.

Veteran striker Steve Johnson came on for Maddocks and immediately made an impact by going close after a great run and cross by SSgt Steve Stacey RM.

It was Stacey who secured victory for the RN in the 88th minute with a fine individual goal for a 3-1 triumph.

RN Vets vs Army Vets

Victorious Vets! For their second Inter-Service clash, the RN Vets travelled to Aldershot.

A number of players were unavailable due to work commitments, injury and illness.

However, with an excellent result the previous week against the RAF, the RN were full of confidence for this match against the Army knowing that a win would give them the Inter-Service title.

With perfect conditions and an excellent third-generation pitch to play on, the RN side went straight on the attack and took the lead within ten minutes.

SSgt Stacey made a great break down the right flank crossed to the front post to Quirke who stepped over the ball for Ritchie Hope to score from close range.

The RN went 2-0 up in the 15th minute when good work

between Steve O'Neil and Hope set up Stacey to score with ease.

The Army had Lee Bradbury (ex-Portsmouth player now Bournemouth Manager) in their side – and RN stand-in goalkeeper Steve Johnson had to be on his toes to force Bradbury to put his shot wide.

A great ball from LReg Martin Smith (Collingwood) sent Hope through on goal but his shot hit the post and rebounded to the versatile LPT Paddy Stephens (Temeraire) to score and make it 3-0 to the RN.

The Navy were well on top now but missing glorious opportunities to increase their lead.

Paddy Stephens had his shot well saved by the Army keeper and O'Neil did all the hard work by rounding the keeper only to see his shot hit the post when the goal was at his mercy!

The Navy defence of CPOPT S Mather, Cpl Foster, WO1 Wallace and Ex-CPOPT Eric Barrett were in superb form by keeping the Army forwards at bay.

In the 37th minute a great goal-line clearance from Marty Wallace stopped the Army from reducing the deficit. It was from this clearance that good work by Stephens allowed O'Neil to make up for his earlier miss and make it 4-0 at the interval.

Within a minute of the re-start Johnson in the RN goal had to make a great save from a long-range Army shot.

In the 55th minute the Army reduced the deficit to three goals when the RN defence were caught by an Army counter-attack.

The soldiers were now enjoying a purple patch and were starting to put the RN side under pressure for the first time.

However, the Navy saw off the threat and forced their way back into the game when O'Neil was brought down in the box for Quirke to score from the penalty to make it 5-1.

In the 76th minute the Senior Service made it 6-1 when Stephens scored his second goal from a good cross by Hope. It was the same pairing that nearly made

7-1; Hope to Saunders, whose shot was cleared off the line.

In the 90th minute the Army got a consolation headed goal for a final score of RN Vets 6-2 Army Vets – the RN hold the Vets Inter Service title for 2012.

It proved to be the only title lifted by the RN representative sides this year.

After so much promise leading in to their respective fixtures, a disappointing set of results meant another year without any silverware – the seniors lost to the RAF (2-0) and Army (1-0); the ladies were narrowly beaten by the Air Force (1-0), then hammered 7-0 by the Army, while the U23s drew with the RAF 1-1, but went down 2-1 to the soldiers.

The ladies' heavy defeat to the Army was an extremely tough result to take at the end of a season where the team had shown real promise.

LStd Lou Lee made a string of great saves between the posts, while at the other end numerous chances went begging.

Every player gave 100 per cent, but the Army were too strong a team to beat.

However, the future of ladies' football is still bright with a high standard of new players joining the team together with more senior players still showing what it means to put on a RN shirt.

Ultimately, everybody involved with RN Ladies Football knows that it is an honour and a privilege to represent their Service and will be more determined than ever to win the Inter-Services next year.

T20 time again

TICKETS are now on sale for the annual Inter-Service **Twenty20** tournament which will again be held at Lord's on Tuesday June 19.

It's the fifth year running the event has been hosted by Marylebone Cricket Club at the sport's spiritual home.

As well as featuring three (hopefully) thrilling matches, the day of Services cricket will also support Combat Stress which helps nearly 5,000 former Service personnel suffering from trauma-related mental ill-health.

Tickets are available at www.interservicest20.co.uk priced £14 for adults, £7 for over 65s and £5 for U16s.

Hard work at BIRC

FRESH from competing at the World Championships in February, the Royal Navy's indoor rowing team once again confronted the physical and mental challenges of a maximum effort 2k at the British Indoor Rowing Championships (BIRC).

The event took on extra significance with the incorporation of the European Championships, writes Paul Winton.

BIRC has been the UK's biggest participation indoor sports event for many years and this year moved to a new venue at the University of Nottingham's sports hall.

The venue proved more benign than many others in respect of the ambient conditions – the air was much less dry and the 'sandpaper' effect on throats was much less apparent, although the effects of extended aerobic and anaerobic effort were still acutely evident.

Ten Royal Navy rowers took part, eight of whom were previously involved in the world championships – and seven of these recorded faster times.

Lt Cdr Jim Thomson (FOST Devonport) posted the RN's fastest time (6m 17.7s) and highest place finish (fifth) in the men's heavyweight 35-39 age group.

Jim was privileged to be racing next to the acknowledged best ever UK indoor rower, multi-world champion Graham Benton.

Slightly slower was LPT Ollie Osborne (BRNC), returning to racing after a 12-month absence; he achieved 6m 18.6s to finish sixth in the men's heavyweight 30-34 age group. Ollie has designs on medal winning performances in the next year and has committed to a long term structured training regime to deliver high-level race performance.

Paul Winton (MCTA) was also a sixth-place finisher in the men's heavyweight 55-59 age group in 6m 49s.

Sub Lt Adrian Long (Sultan) did not have the best preparation leading up to the race, but finished a highly-creditable tenth place in the very competitive men's open heavyweight.

His time of 6m 21.9s was over eight seconds slower than his world championship performance, but he completes the season with that earlier 6m 13.7s as the fastest Royal Navy 2k race performance for the season.

Completing the list of the Royal Navy's top-ten placings was Lt Cdr Julian Stevenson (Temeraire), with perhaps the performance of the day. Before the event 'Jules' was still hurting from not achieving a sub-6m 30s time at the world championships, although the training regime data had indicated this was possible.

Well known for giving his all in races, his eighth place finish in the men's heavyweight 45-49 age group, with a time of 6m 29.7s, was just reward for total commitment to every stroke, even when applying his 'eyes wide shut' approach.

Immediately following the race, his writhing recovery attracted the attention of the event's supporting medical staff, who seemed happy to accept the team manager's assurance that "this was a normal post-race response".

CPOET(MESM) Collin Leiba (HMS Talent) – formerly 'Mr Plymouth 1992' – achieved a 2k personal best time of 6m 31.2s as he finished in 12th place, also in the men's heavyweight 45-49 age group.

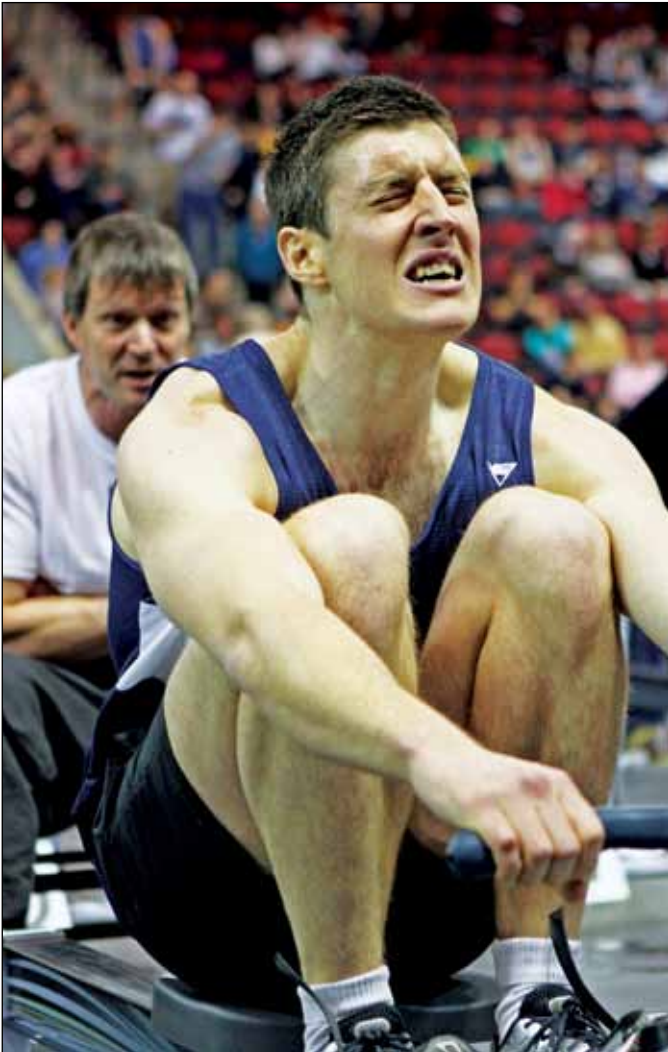
Shortly after the event he set a UK 40-49 age group 100m record of 14.5s in the Wyvern Centre Gym at HMS Drake.

Lt Kev Anderson (Shrivensham) was pleased to go eight seconds faster than his previous race as he finished 29th in a time of 6 mins 53.6 secs. CPOPT Mark Harrold (Nelson) was close behind in 35th place in a time of 6m 57.5s.

Lt Cdr Rory West (Navy Command) in the men's heavyweight 40-44 age group (17th) and Sub Lt Chris Matthews (824 NAS) in the men's open heavyweight (26th) both went faster than their world championship races in times of 6m 40.7s and 6m 38.5s respectively.

Although BIRC was the last major indoor rowing event of the season, nearly all of those named above feature highly in Concept2 UK's monthly challenge, which has two of its seven rounds to go.

First point of contact for those keen to exploit opportunities using indoor rowing machines should be local PT staff. Additional info is available from Paul Winton (MCTA) MOD: 9380 23644 / [DES MCTA-MS-MVAU1](#).



● The exertion is written on Sub Lt Adrian Long's face while Paul Winton offers moral support

Picture: Anne Yates



Nearly sled heaven for Matt

THIS is (probably) a sight we've not had in Navy News before: **husky racing**.

This is NA(SE) Matthew Evans being hauled by two of his seven dogs – Tonrar and Laika – on his way to second place in the ABSA Sled Dog Championships.

The 29-year-old from RNAS Yeovilton has been dog racing – aka mushing – for the past three years.

The season runs from the October to March in the UK, with a three-wheel 'trike' replacing the traditional sled – given the

general lack of snow in Blighty, even over the winter.

Despite that shortage of the white stuff, the dogs still like it cold – they shouldn't race if the temperature's above 15°C.

The sport has been established in Britain for 20 years with around 60 mushers contending each race.

There were more than 30 husky/rider combinations in Matthew's two-dog class.

To help him to that second place overall – officially 'reserve champion' behind winner

Tonin Aguilera – for the 2011-12 season, the survival equipment specialist, who's been in the RN 13 years, trained three to four times a week.

Although the sled season is over, Matthew will be out and about with his Siberian huskies over the summer at shows around the UK – and is hoping to make another appearance at the world's most famous dog show, Crufts, in 2013.

You can find out more about mushing at absasleddogracing.org.uk.

U23s offer bright spot

IN TURBULENT times, with a reduced pool, the Army were not quite sure who would be allowed to turn up to play in the Inter-Services U23 hockey championships.

In the end their long-serving manager Peter Rosser had enough for a full squad, writes Alan Walker, RNHA.

It looked as if he had struck gold when Tom Smith notched up a hat-trick for 3-0 to the Army inside 18 minutes in the opening match versus the RAF.

Gary Clark added a fourth by half time, Tom Kitley made it five early in the second half before Alex Newton got one back for the airmen.

Two more for Clark completed the second Army hat-trick for 7-1 before the typically-competitive Martin Sully pulled another back for the RAF at 7-2.

This emphatic Army win would probably faze the watching Navy lads, but how wrong could one be?

RN manager Lt Cdr Lee McEvoy had worked very hard all season to prepare his Navy lads often fixing them up with run-outs with and against the Seniors and Veterans teams and this was to pay off handsomely.

The RN/RAF encounter was a much closer affair than the Army/RAF clash with no score to either team for half an hour.

Christopher Simms eventually scored from open play on 31 minutes to give the RN a 1-0 half time lead.

After the restart, the RAF's Luke Beddoes converted a penalty corner and four minutes later Sully for the RAF put a penalty stroke past a helmeted Ed Close for a 2-1 lead; goalie Ben Wain had been sent off in the incident which led to the stroke and now frantic efforts were made to get Wain's pads on to Tris Bell for the duration of the suspension period.

Navy skipper James Rennie was quite clearly incensed by all this nonsense and not only converted his own penalty stroke for 2-2 but within two minutes had thundered in an unstoppable penalty corner for 3-2 to the Navy.

The RAF were not done yet, however, and Tom Grimshaw equalised for the airmen inside three minutes.

This time the still-growling and dominant Rennie left it a bit longer – four minutes – before restoring the RN lead for 4-3



● AB Richard Fisher – later scourge of the Army – on the attack against the RAF, where he scored the match-winner

Picture Lt Col Charles Jackman

and his hat-trick from another remarkable penalty corner.

The game was completely end-to-end now with no quarter asked or given. The RAF were still smarting from the previous day's drubbing at the hands of the Army (and determined to make amends) and the RN determined that no way were they going to come off second best in this ding-dong encounter.

The RAF's Ben Tanner set up a thrilling finale with ten minutes left, when having forced a penalty corner, put it away with aplomb for 4-4.

If anything RN heads lifted at this and small ships man AB Richard Fisher (MCM Portsmouth) – unlucky not to have been selected for the RN seniors after several promising run-outs – picked his spot at a penalty corner for a 5-4 Navy lead with three minutes remaining.

Despite two more RAF corners the Navy defence managed to hold firm; Close and Bell remained cool, following the magnificent example of goalkeeper submariner Ben Wain.

The Navy-Army match took place just three hours later and it looked as if Fisher had not had time to cool down before he was rattling them in again.

Having found his scoring touch at the end of the RAF match there was no score versus the Army for the first 15 minutes.

Fisher then scored a 14-minute hat-trick starting with one where he went through on his own then a second from a penalty corner then an unbelievable third from open play again – all by minute 29 – to put the Navy 'unassailably' (one thought) in front.

Well, it took the Army's Tom Kitley some 28 minutes to get to 3-1 by way of a 57th-minute corner.

Both sides could sense victory: the Navy by holding on, the Army by pulling one more back to get into real contention. The Army were in rapidly-improving mode as the Navy legs began to feel the strain of two tough matches in the same day.

Sure enough, the Army's Tom Smith 'snuck in' for 3-2 with two minutes remaining.

It was time for stout hearts from the Navy lads and that's just what we got.

It was if a bluejacket band had marched on playing *Heart of Oak* such was the lift that Fisher, Mne Jim Ewing (did the U23s ever have a gutsier player?), the reliable Rennie, the splendid Wain, in fact the whole RN team managed to bring to this game.

They were not – repeat not – going to let the soldiers in for this one. And so it proved as the match ran out 3-2.

The RN had won both U23 matches in a single day – both by the odd goal and not least a couple of crucial when-it-mattered hat-tricks.

Ben Wain was voted Man of the U23 tournament and James Rennie lifted the Dundas Dagger for the winning team in the Army-Navy clash.

Otherwise, the Inter-Services in terms of results put the RN in a very definite third.

That said, the senior men only lost 2-1 to the Army and drew 1-1 with the RAF winners, so it wasn't that bad...